

MISS BRADDON

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THE LEVELS OF ARDEN.

BY MISS BRADDON.

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CHAPTER XVI.

LORD CALDERWOOD IS THE CAUSE OF INCONVENIENCE.

The preparations for the wedding went on gayly, and whatever inclination to revolt may have lurked in George Fairfax's breast, he made no sign. Since his insolent address that night in the corridor he had scarcely spoken to Clarissa; but he kept a furtive watch upon her, notwithstanding, and she knew it, and sickened under it as under an evil influence. He was very angry with her—she was fully conscious of that—unjustifiably, unreasonably angry. More than once, when Mr. Granger was especially attentive, she had encountered a withering glance from those dark gray eyes; and she had been weak enough, wicked enough, perhaps, to try and make him perceive that Mr. Granger's attentions were in no way pleasant to her. She could bear any thing better than that he should think her capable of courting this man's admiration.

While this silent struggle was going on, and the date of the marriage growing nearer and nearer, Mr. Granger's attentions became daily more marked. It was impossible even for Clarissa, preoccupied as she was by those other thoughts, to doubt that he admired her with something more than common admiration. Miss Granger's evident uneasiness and anger were in themselves sufficient to give emphasis to this fact. That young lady, mistress of herself as she was upon most occasions, found the present state of things too much for her endurance. For the last ten years of her life, ever since she was a precocious damsel of twelve, brought to a premature state of cultivation by an expensive forcing apparatus of governesses and masters, she had been in the habit of assuring herself and her confidantes that her father would never marry again. She had a very keen sense of the importance of wealth, and from that tender age of twelve or so upward she had been fully aware of the diminution her own position would undergo in the event of a second marriage, and the advent of a son to the house of Granger. Governesses and maid-servants had perhaps impressed this upon her at some still earlier stage of her existence; but from this time upward she had needed nothing to remind her of the fact, and she had watched her father with an unwearied vigilance.

More than once, strong-minded and practical as he was, she had seen him in danger. Attractive widows and dashing spinsters had marked him for their prey, and he had seemed not quite adamant; but the hour of peril had passed, and the widow or the spinster had gone her way, with all her munitions of war expended, and Daniel Granger still unscathed. This time it was very different. Mr. Granger showed an interest in Clarissa which he had never before exhibited in any member of her sex since he wooed and won the first Mrs. Granger; and as his marriage had been by no means a romantic affair, but rather a prudential arrangement made and entered upon by Daniel Granger the elder, iron-master, of Sheffield, on the one part, and Thomas Talloway, cotton-spinner, of Manchester, on the other part, it is doubtful whether Miss Sophy Talloway had ever in her antenuptial days engrossed so much of his attention.

Having no one else at Hale to whom she could venture to unbosom herself, Miss Granger was fain to make a confidante of her maid, although she did not, as a general rule, affect familiarity with servants. This maid, who was a mature damsel of five-and-thirty or upward, and a most estimable Church-of-England person, had been with Miss Granger for a great many years; had curled her hair for her when she wore it in a crop, and even remembered her in her last edition of pinnares. Some degree of familiarity therefore might be excused, and the formal Sophia would now and then expand a little in her intercourse with Warman.

One night, a very little while before Lady Geraldine's wedding-day, the cautious Warman, while brushing Miss Granger's long, straight, light brown hair, ventured to suggest that her mistress looked out of spirits. Had she said that Sophia looked excessively cross she would scarcely have been beside the mark.

"Well, Warman," Miss Granger replied, in rather a shrewish tone, "I am out of spirits. I have been very much annoyed this evening by papa's attentions to—by the designing conduct of a young lady here."

"I think I can guess who the young lady is, miss," Warman answered, shrewdly.

"Oh, I suppose so," cried Sophia, giving her head an angry jerk, which almost sent the brush out of her abigail's hand: "servants know every thing."

"Well, you see, miss, servants have eyes and ears, and they can't very well help using them. People think we're inquisitive and prying if we venture to see things going on under our very noses; and so hypocrisy gets to be almost part of a servant's education, and what people call a good servant is a smooth-faced creature that pretends to see nothing and to understand nothing. But my principles won't allow of my stooping to that sort of thing, Miss Granger, and what I think I say. I know my duty as a servant, and I know the value of my own immortal soul as a human being."

"How you do preach, Warman! Who wants you to be a hypocrite?" exclaimed Sophia, impatiently. "It's always provoking to hear that one's affairs have been talked over by a herd of servants; but I suppose it's inevitable. And pray what have they been saying about papa?"

"Well, miss, I've heard a good deal of talk of one kind and another. You see your papa is looked upon as a great gentleman in the county, and people will talk about him. There's Norris, Lady Laura's own footman, who's a good deal in the drawing-room—really a very intelligent, well-brought-up young man, and, I am happy to say, *not* a dissenter. Norris takes a good deal of notice of what's going on, and he has made a good many remarks upon your papa's attention to Miss Lavel. Looking at the position of the parties, you see, miss, it would be such a curious thing if it were to be brought round for that young lady to be mistress of Arden Court."

"Good gracious me, Warman!" cried Sophia, aghast; "you don't suppose that papa would marry again?"

"Well, I can't really say, miss. But when a gentleman of your papa's age pays so much attention to a lady young enough to be his daughter, it generally ends that way."

There was evidently no consolation to be obtained from Warman, nor was that astute handmaiden to be betrayed into any expression of opinion against Miss Lavel. It seemed to her more than probable that Clarissa Lavel might come before long to reign over the household at Arden, and the all-powerful Sophia sink to a minor position. Strong language of any kind was, therefore, likely to be dangerous. Hannah Warman valued her place, which was a good one, and would perhaps be still better under a more impulsive and generous mistress. The safest thing, therefore, was to close the conversation with one of those pious platitudes which Warman had always at her command.

"Whatever may happen, miss, we are in the hands of Providence," she said, solemnly; "and let us trust that things will be so regulated as to work for the good of our immortal souls. No one can go through life without trials, miss, and perhaps yours may be coming upon you now; but we know that such chastisements are intended for our benefit."

Sophia Granger had encouraged this kind of talk from the lips of Warman and other humble disciples too often to be able to object to it just now; but her temper was by no means improved by this conversation, and she dismissed her maid presently with a very cool good-night.

On the third day before the wedding George Fairfax's mother arrived at the Castle, in order to assist in this important event in her son's life. Clarissa contemplated this lady with a peculiar interest, and was not a little wounded by the strange coldness with which Mrs. Fairfax greeted her upon her being introduced by Lady Laura to the new arrival. This coldness was all the more striking on account of the perfect urbanity of Mrs. Fairfax's manners in a general way, and a certain winning gentleness which distinguished her on most occasions. It seemed to Clarissa as if she recoiled with something like aversion at the sound of her name.

"Miss Lavel of Arden Court, I believe?" she said, looking at Lady Laura.

"Yes; my dear Clarissa is the only daughter of the gentleman who, till lately, was owner of Arden Court. It has passed into other hands now."

"I beg your pardon. I did not know there had been any change."

And then Mrs. Fairfax continued her previous conversation with Lady Laura, as if anxious to have done with the subject of Miss Lavel.

Nor in the three days before the wedding did she take any farther notice of Clarissa; a neglect the girl felt keenly; all the more so because she was interested in spite of herself in this pale, faded lady of sixty, who still bore the traces of great beauty, and who carried herself with the grace of a queen. She had that air *du faubourg* which we hear of in the duchesses and marchionesses of a departed era in Parisian society—a serene and tranquil elegance which never tries to be elegant, a perfect self-possession which never degenerates into insolence.

In a party so large as that now assembled at Hale, this tacit avoidance of one person could scarcely be called a rudeness. It might so easily be accidental. Clarissa felt it, nevertheless, and felt somehow that it was not accidental. Though she could never be any thing to George Fairfax, though all possibility even of friendship was at an end between them, she would have liked to gain his mother's regard. It was an idle wish, perhaps, but scarcely an unnatural one.

She watched Mrs. Fairfax and Lady Geraldine together. The affection between those two was very evident. Never did the younger lady appear to greater advantage than in her intercourse with her future mother-in-law. All pride and coldness vanished in that society, and Geraldine Challoner became genial and womanly.

"She has played her cards well," Barbara Fermor said, maliciously. "It is the mother who has brought about this marriage."

If Mrs. Fairfax showed herself coldly disposed toward Clarissa, there was plenty of warmth on the parts of the Ladies Emily and Louisa, who arrived at the castle about the same time, and at once took a fancy to their sister's protégée.

"Laura has told us so much about you, Miss Lavel," said Lady Louisa, "and we mean to be very fond of you, if you will allow us; and, oh, please my we call you Clarissa? It is such a sweet name!"

Both these ladies had passed that fearful turning-point in woman's life, her thirtieth birthday, and had become only more gushing and enthusiastic with increasing years. They were very much like Lady Laura, had all her easy good-nature and liveliness, and were more or less afraid of the stately Geraldine.

"Do you know, we are quite glad she is going to be married at last," Lady Emily said in a

confidential tone to Clarissa; "for she has kept up a kind of frigid atmosphere at home that I really believe has helped to frighten away all our admirers. Men of the present day don't like that kind of thing. It went out of fashion in England with King Charles I., I think, and in France with Louis XIV. You know how badly the royal household behaved coming home from his funeral, laughing and talking and all that. I believe it arose from their relief at thinking that the king of forms and ceremonies was dead. We always have our nicest little parties—kettle-drums, and suppers after the opera, and all that sort of thing—when Geraldine is away; for we can do anything with papa."

The great day came, and the heavens were propitious. A fine, clear September day, with a cold wind and a warm sun. A day upon which the diaphanous costumes of the bride-maids might be a shade too airy; but not a stern or cruel day, to tinge their young noses with frosty hue, or blow the wrinkles out of their luxuriant hair.

The bride-maids were the Ladies Emily and Louisa Challoner, the two Misses Fermor, Miss Granger, and Clarissa, six in all; a moderation which Lady Laura was inclined to boast of as a kind of Spartan simplicity. They were all to be dressed alike, in white, with bonnets that seemed composed of waxen-looking white heather, and tremulous harebells, and with blue sashes to match the harebells. The dresses were Lady Laura's inspiration. They had come to her almost in her sleep, she declared, when she had well-nigh despaired of realizing her vague desires; and Clarissa's costume was, like the ball-dress, a present from her benefactress.

The nine-o'clock breakfast—a meal that began at nine and rarely ended till eleven—was hurried over in the most uncomfortable and desultory manner on this eventful morning. The principals in the great drama did not appear at all, and Clarissa and Miss Granger were the only two bride-maids who could spare half an hour from the cares of the toilette. The rest breakfasted in the seclusion of their several apartments, with their hair in crimping-pins. Miss Granger was too perfect a being to wrinkle her hair, or to waste three hours on dressing, even for a wedding. Lady Laura showed herself among her guests, for a quarter of an hour or so, in a semi-hysterical flutter; so anxious that every thing should go off well, so fearful that something might happen, she knew not what, to throw the machinery of her arrangements out of gear.

"I suppose it's only a natural feeling on such an occasion as this," she said, "but I really do feel

as if something were going to happen. Things have gone on so smoothly up to this morning—

no disappointments from milliners, no stupid mistakes on the part of those railway people—every

thing has gone upon velvet; and, now, it is coming to the crisis, I am quite nervous."

Of course every one declared that this was per-

fectly natural, and recommended his or her fa-

vorite specific—a few drops of sal-volatile—a li-

queur-glass of dry Curaçoa—red lavender—chlo-

rodyne—and so on; and then Lady Laura laughed and called herself absurd, and hurried away to array herself in a pearl-colored silk, half smooth-

ed by puffs of pale pink areophane and Brus-

sels lace flounces; a dress that was all pearl

gray and rose and white, like the sky at early

morning.

Mr. Armstrong, Mr. Granger, with some mil-

tary men and country squires, took their break-

fast as calmly as if a wedding were part of the daily

business of life. Miss Granger exhibited a polite

indifference about the great event; Clarissa was

pale and nervous, not able to give much atten-

tion to Daniel Granger, who had contrived to sit

next her that morning, and talked to her a good

deal, with an apparent unconsciousness of the

severe gaze of his daughter, who sat exactly op-

posite to him. She had a feeling as if she had

been acting a part in a tragedy, the end whereof

was near at hand.

She was glad to make her toilette an excuse

for leaving Mr. Granger; but once in the sanc-

tuary of her own room, she sat down in an ab-

sent manner, and made no attempt to begin

dressing. Fosset, the maid, found her there at

a quarter past ten o'clock—the ceremony was to

take place at eleven—and gave a cry of horror

at seeing the toilette uncommenced.

"Good gracious me, miss! what have you

been thinking of? Your hair not begun or

nothing! I've been almost torn to bits with one

and another—Miss Fermor's maid bothering for

long hair-pins and narrow black ribbon; and

Jane Roberts—Lady Emily Challoner's maid—who

really never has any thing handy, wanting

half the things out of my work-box—or I should

have been with you ever so long ago. My lady

would be in a way if you were late."

"I think my hair will do very well as it is,

Fosset," Clarissa said, listlessly.

"Lor, no, miss; not in that dowdy way. It

don't half show it off."

Clarissa seated herself before the dressing-table with an air of resignation rather than interest, and the expeditious Fosset began her work. It was done very speedily—that wealth of hair was so easy to dress; there was no artful manipulation of long hair-pins and black ribbon needed to unite borrowed tresses with real ones. The dress was put on, and Clarissa was invited to look at herself in the cheval-glass.

"I do wish you had a bit more color in your

cheeks to-day, miss," Fosset said, with rather a vexed air.

"Not that I'd recommend you any

of their vinegar rouges, or inefaceable bloom,

or any thing of that kind. But I don't think I ever

saw you look so pale. One would think you

were going to be married, instead of Lady Geral-

dine. She's as cool as a cucumber this morning,

Sarah Thompson told me just now. You can't

put her out easily."

The carriages were driving up to the great

door by this time. It was about twenty minutes

to eleven, and in ten minutes more the procession would be starting. Hale church was within five minutes' drive of the Castle.

Clarissa went fluttering down to the drawing-room, where she supposed people would assemble. There was no one there but Mr. Granger, who was stalking up and down the spacious room, dressed in the newest and stiffest of coats and waistcoats, and looking as if he were going to assist at a private hanging. Miss Lovel felt almost inclined to run away at sight of him. The man seemed to pursue her somehow; and since that night when George Fairfax had offered her his mocking congratulations Mr. Granger's attentions had been particularly repugnant to her.

She could not draw back, however, without positive rudeness, and it was only a question of five minutes; so she went in, and entered upon an interesting little conversation about the weather. It was still fine; there was no appearance of rain; a most auspicious day, really; and so on—from Mr. Granger; to which novel remarks Clarissa assented meekly.

"There are people who attach a good deal of significance to that kind of thing," he said, presently. "For my own part, if I were going to be married to the woman I loved, I should care little how black the sky above us might be. That sounds rather romantic for me, doesn't it? A man of fifty has no right to feel like that."

This he said with a half-bitter laugh. Clarissa was spared the trouble of answering by the entrance of more bride-maids—Lady Louisa Challoner and Miss Granger—with three of the military men, who wore hot-house flowers in their button-holes, and were altogether arrayed like the lilies of the field, but who had rather the air of considering this marriage business a tiresome interruption to the partridge-shooting.

"I suppose we are going to start directly," cried Lady Louisa, who was a fluttering creature of three-and-thirty, always eager to flit from one scene to another. "If we don't, I really think we shall be late; and there is some dreadful law, isn't there, to prevent people being married after eleven o'clock?"

"After twelve," Mr. Granger answered, in his matter-of-fact way. "Lady Geraldine has ample margin for delay."

"But why not after twelve?" asked Lady Louisa, with a childish air: "why not in the afternoon or evening, if one liked? What can be the use of such a ridiculous law? One might as well live in Russia."

She fluttered to one of the windows and looked out.

"There are all the carriages. How well the men look! Laura must have spent a fortune in white ribbon and gloves for them. And the horses, dear things!"—a woman of Lady Louisa's stamp is generally enthusiastic about horses, it is such a safe thing—"they look as if they knew it was a wedding. Oh, good gracious!"

"What is the matter, Lady Louisa?"

"A man from the railway, with a telegram—yes, I am sure it's a telegram! Do you know, I have such a horror of telegrams! I always fancy they mean illness—or death—or something dreadful. Very absurd of me, isn't it? And I dare say this is only a message about some delayed parcel, or some one who was to be here and can't come, or something of that kind."

The room was full of idle people by this time. Every one went to the open window and stared down at the man who had brought the telegram. He had given his message, and was standing on the broad flight of steps before the Castle door, waiting for the return of the official who had taken it. Whether the electric wires had brought the tidings of some great calamity or a milliner's apology for a delayed bonnet it was impossible to guess. The messenger stood there, stolid and impenetrable, and there was nothing to be divined from his aspect.

But presently, while a vague anxiety possessed almost every one present, there came from the staircase without a sudden cry of woe—a woman's shriek, long and shrill—a cry as ominous as the banshee's wail itself. There was a rush to the door, and the women crowded out in a distracted way. Lady Laura was fainting in her husband's arms, and George Fairfax was standing near her reading a telegram.

People had not long to wait for the evil news. Lord Calderwood had been seized with a paralytic stroke—his third attack—at ten o'clock the previous night, and had expired at half past eight that morning. There could be no wedding that day—not for many days and weeks to come.

"Oh, Geraldine, my poor Geraldine, let me go to her!" cried Lady Laura, disengaging herself from her husband's arms, and rushing up stairs. Mr. Armstrong hurried after her.

"Laura, my sweet girl, don't agitate yourself; consider yourself," he cried, and followed, with Lady Louisa sobbing and wailing behind him. Geraldine had not left her room yet. The ill news was to find her on the threshold, calm and lovely in the splendor of her bridal dress.

CHAPTER XVII.

"TIS DEEPEST WINTER IN LORD TIMON'S PURSE."

BEFORE nightfall—before the evening which was to have been enlivened by a dinner-party and a carpet-dance, and while bride and bridegroom should have been speeding southward to that noble Kentish mansion which his uncle had lent George Fairfax—before the rooks flew homeward across the woods beyond Hale—there had been a general flight from the Castle. People were anxious to leave the mourners alone with their grief, and even the most intimate felt more or less in the way, though Mr. Armstrong entreated that there might be no hurry, no inconvenience for any one.

"Poor Laura won't be fit to be seen for a day or two," he said, "and, of course, I shall have to go up to town for the funeral; but that need make no difference. Hale is large enough for every one, and it will be a comfort to her by-and-by to find her friends round her."

Through all that dreary day Lady Laura wandered about her morning-room, alternately sobbing and talking of her father to those chosen friends with whom she held little interviews. Her sisters Louisa and Emily were with her for the greater part of the time, echoing her lamentations like a feeble chorus. Geraldine kept her room, and would see no one—not even him who was to have been her bridegroom, and who might have supposed that he had the chiefest right to console her in this sudden affliction.

Clarissa spent more than an hour with Lady Laura, listening with a tender interest to her praises of the departed. It seemed as if no elderly nobleman—more or less improvident for the last twenty years of his life—had ever supported such a load of virtues as Lord Calderwood had carried with him to the grave. To praise him inordinately was the only consolation his three daughters could find in the first fervor of their grief. Time was when they had been apt to confess to one another that papa was occasionally rather "trying," a vague expression which scarcely involved a lapse of filial duty on the part of the grumbler. But to hear them to-day one would have supposed that they had never been tried; that life with Lord Calderwood in a small house in Chapel Street, Mayfair, had been altogether a happy existence.

Clarissa listened reverently, believing implicitly in the merits of the newly lost, and did her best to console her kind friend during the hour Mr. Armstrong allowed her to spend with Lady Laura. At the end of that time he came and solemnly fetched her away, after a pathetic farewell.

"You must come to me again, Clary, and very soon," said my lady, embracing her. "I only wish Fred would let you stay with me now. You would be a great comfort."

"My dearest Lady Laura, it is better not. You have your sisters."

"Yes, they are very good; but I wanted you to stay, Clary. I had such plans for you. Oh, by-the-bye, the Grangers will be going back to-day, I suppose. Why should they not take you with them in their great traveling carriage? Frederick, will you arrange for the Grangers to take Clarissa home?" cried Lady Laura to her husband, who was hovering near the door. In the midst of her grief my lady brightened a little with the idea of managing something, even so small a matter as this.

"Of course, my dear," replied the affectionate Fred. "Granger shall take Miss Lovel home. And now I must positively hurry her away; all this talk and excitement is bad for you."

"I must see the Fermors before they go. You'll let me see the Fermors, Fred?"

"Well, well, I'll bring them just to say goodbye—that's all. Come along, Miss Lovel."

Clarissa followed him along the corridors.

"Oh, if you please, Mr. Armstrong," she said.

"I did not like to worry Lady Laura, but I would so much rather go home alone in a fly."

"Nonsense! the Grangers can take you. You could have Laura's brougham, of course; but if she wants you to go with the Grangers, you must go. Her word is law, and she's sure to ask me about it by-and-by. She's a wonderful woman; thinks of everything."

They met Mr. and Miss Granger presently, dressed for the journey.

"Oh, if you please, Granger, I want you to take Miss Lovel home in your carriage. You've plenty of room, I know."

Sophia looked as if she would have liked to say that there was no room, but her father's face quite flushed with pleasure.

"I shall be only too happy," he said, "if Miss Lovel will trust herself to our care."

"And perhaps you'll explain to her father what has happened, and how sorry we are to lose her, and so on."

"Certainly, my dear Armstrong. I shall make a point of seeing Mr. Lovel in order to do so."

So Clarissa had a seat in Mr. Granger's luxurious carriage, the proprietor whereof sat opposite to her, admiring the pale patrician face, and wondering a little what that charm was which made it seem to him more beautiful than any other countenance he had ever looked upon. They did not talk much, Mr. Granger only making a few stereotyped remarks about the uncertainties of this life, or occasionally pointing out some feature of the landscape to Clarissa. The horses went at a splendid pace. Their owner would have preferred a slower transit.

"Remember, Miss Lovel," he said, as they approached the village of Arden, "you have promised to come and see us."

"You are very good; but I go out so little; and papa is always averse to my visiting."

"But he can't be that any more after allowing you to stay at the Castle, or he will offend commoner folks, like Sophy and me, by his exclusiveness. Besides, he told me he wished Sophy and you to be good friends. I am sure he will let you come to us. When shall it be? Shall we say to-morrow, before luncheon—at twelve or one, say? I will show you what I've done for the house in the morning, and Sophy can take you over her schools and cottages in the afternoon."

Sophia Granger made no attempt to second this proposition; but her father was so eager and decisive that it seemed quite impossible for Clarissa to say no.

"If papa will let me come," she said, doubtfully.

"Oh, I am quite sure he will not refuse after

what he was good enough to say to me," replied Mr. Granger; "and if he does not feel equal to going about with us in the morning, I hope we shall be able to persuade him to come to dinner."

They were at the little rustic gate before Mill Cottage by this time. How small the place looked after Hale Castle! but not without a prettiness of its own. The Virginia creeper was reddening on the wall; and the casement windows open to the air and sunshine. Ponto ran out directly the gate was opened—first to bark at the carriage, and then to leap joyously about Clarissa, over-powering her with a fond canine welcome.

"You will come in with us, Sophia?" asked her father, when he had alighted and handed Clarissa out of the carriage.

"I think not, papa. You can't want me; and this dreadful morning has given me a wretched headache."

"I thought there was something amiss. It would be more respectful to Mr. Lovel for you to come in. I dare say he'll excuse you, however, when he hears you are ill."

Clarissa held out her hand, which Miss Granger took with an almost oblivious reluctance; and the two young ladies said "Good-by" to each other without a word from Sophia about the engagement for the next day.

They found Mr. Lovel in his favorite sitting-room; not dreaming over a Greek play or a volume of Bentley, as it was his custom to do, but seriously engaged with a number of open letters and papers scattered on the writing-table before him—papers that looked alarmingly like tradesmen's bills. He was taken by surprise on the entrance of Clarissa and her companion, and swept the papers into an open drawer with rather a nervous hand.

"My dear Clarissa, this is quite unexpected! How do you do, Mr. Granger? How very good of you to bring my little girl over to see me! Will you take that chair by the window? I was deep in a file of accounts when you came in. A man must examine his affairs sometimes, however small his household may be. Well, Clary, what news of our kind friends at the Castle? Why, bless my soul, this is the wedding-day, isn't it? I had quite forgotten the date. Has

"Yes, papa; there has been a great misfortune, and the wedding is put off."

Between them Mr. Granger and Clarissa explained the state of affairs at the Castle. Mr. Lovel seemed really shocked by the intelligence of the Earl's death.

"Poor Calderwood! He and I were great friends thirty years ago. I suppose it's nearly twenty since I last saw him. He was one of the handsomest men I ever knew—Lady Geraldine takes after him—and when he was in the diplomatic service had really a very brilliant career before him; but he missed it somehow. Had always rather a frivolous mind, I fancy, and a want of perseverance. Poor Calderwood! And so he is gone! How old could he have been? Not much over sixty, I believe. I'll look into Debrett presently."

As soon as he could decently do so after this Mr. Granger urged his invitation for the next day.

"Oh, certainly, by all means. Clary shall come to you as easily as you like. It will be a great relief for her from the dullness of this place. And—well—yes, if you insist upon it, I'll join you at dinner. But you see what a perfect recluse I am. There will be no one else, I suppose?"

"You have only to say that you wish it, and there shall be no one else," Mr. Granger answered, courteously.

Never had he been so anxious to propitiate any one. People had courted him more or less all his life; and here he was almost suing for the acquaintance of this broken-down spendthrift—a man whom he had secretly despised until now.

On this assurance Mr. Lovel consented to dine with his neighbor for the first time; and Mr. Granger, having no excuse for further lingering, took his departure, remembering all at once that he had such a thing as a daughter waiting for him in the carriage outside.

He went, and Clarissa took up the thread of her old life just where she had dropped it. Her father was by no means so gracious or agreeable to-day as he had been during his brief visit to Hale Castle. He took out his tradesmen's letters and bills when Mr. Granger was gone, and went on with his examination of them, gazing cloudily now and then, or sometimes stopping to rest his head on his hands, with a dreary, long-drawn sigh. Clarissa would have been very glad to offer her sympathy, to utter some word of comfort, but there was something in her father's aspect which forbade any injudicious approach. She sat by the open window with a book in her hand, but not reading, waiting patiently in the hope that he would share his troubles with her by-and-by.

He went on with his work for about an hour, and then tied the papers in a bundle with a hasty, impatient air.

"Arithmetick is no use in such a case as mine," he said; "no man can make fifty pounds pay a hundred. I suppose it must end in the bankruptcy court. It will be only our last humiliation—the culminating disgrace."

"The bankruptcy court! Oh, papa!" cried Clarissa, piteously.

She had a very vague idea as to what bankruptcy meant, but felt that it was something utterly shameful—the next thing to a criminal offense.

"Better men than I have gone through it," Mr. Lovel went on, with a sigh, and without the faintest notice of his daughter's dismay; "but I couldn't stand Arden and Holbrough after that degradation. I must go abroad, to some dull old town in the south of France, where I could have my books and decent wine, and where, as regards

everything else, I should be in a living grave."

"But they would never make you bankrupt, surely, papa?" Clarissa exclaimed, in the same piteous tone.

"They would never make me bankrupt!" echoed her father, fretfully. "What do you mean by *they*? You talk like a baby, Clarissa. Do you suppose that tradesmen and bankers and bill-discounters would have more mercy upon me than upon other people? They may give me more time than they would give another man, perhaps, because they know I have some pride of race, and would coin my heart's blood rather than adopt expedients that other men make light of; but when they know there is no more to be got out of me they will do their worst. It is only a question of time."

"Are you very much in debt, papa?" Clarissa asked, timidly, anticipating a rebuff.

"No; that is the most confounded part of the business. My liabilities only amount to a few pitiful hundreds. When I sold Arden—and I did not do that till I was obliged, you may be-

lieve—the bulk of the purchase-money went to the mortgagees. With the residue—a paltry sum—I bought myself an annuity: a transaction which I was able to conclude upon better terms than most men of my age, on account of my precarious health, and to which I was most strongly urged by my legal advisers. On this I have existed, or tried to exist, ever since; but the income has not been sufficient even for the maintenance of this narrow household. If I lived in a garret, I must live like a gentleman, and should always be at the mercy of my servants. These are honest enough, I dare say, but I have no power of checking my expenditure. And then I had your schooling to pay for—no small amount, I assure you."

"Thank Heaven that is over, papa. And now, if you would only let me go out as a governess, I might be some help to you instead of a burden."

"There's time enough to think of that. You are not much of a burden to me at present. I don't suppose you add many pounds a year to the expenses of this house. And if I have to face the inevitable, and see my name in the *Gazette*, we must begin life again upon a smaller scale, and in a cheaper place—some out-of-the-way corner of France or Belgium. The government will keep till I am dead. You can always be of some use to me as a companion, if you choose."

This was quite a concession. Clarissa came

over to her father's chair, and laid her hand caressingly upon his shoulder.

"My dear father," she said, in a low, sweet voice, "you make me almost happy in spite of our troubles. I wish for nothing better than to stay with you always. And by-and-by, if we have to live abroad, where you need not be so particular about our name, I may be able to help you a little—by means of art or music—without leaving home. I think I could be happy anywhere with you, papa, if you would only love me a little."

That appeal touched a heart not easily moved. Marmaduke Lovel put his hand—such a slender, feminine hand—into his daughter's with an affectionate pressure.

"Poor child!" he said, sadly. "It would be hard if I couldn't love you a little. But you were born under an evil star, Clarissa, and hitherto, perhaps I have tried to shut my heart against you. I won't do that any more. Whatever affection is in me to give shall be yours. God knows I have no reason to withhold it, nor any other creature on this earth on whom to bestow it. God knows it is a new thing for me to have my love sued for."

There was a melancholy in his tone which touched his daughter deeply. He seemed to have struck the keynote of his life in those few words: a disappointed, unsuccessful life; a youth in which there had been some hidden cause for the ungenial temper of his middle age.

It was nearly six o'clock by this time, and Clarissa strolled into the garden with her father while the table was being laid for dinner. There were faint glimpses of red and yellow here and there among the woods around Arden Court, but it still seemed summertime. The late roses

were in full bloom in Mr. Lovel's fertile garden, the rosy apples were brightening in the orchard, the plums purpling on a crumbling old red-brick wall that bounded the narrow patch of kitchen-garden. Yes, even after Hale Castle, the place seemed pretty; and a pang went through Clarissa's heart as she thought that this, too, they might have to leave; even this humble home was not secure to them.

Father and daughter dined together very pleasantly. Clarissa had been made quite happy by her father's unwonted tenderness, and Mr. Lovel was in tolerable spirits in spite of that dreary afternoon's labor, that hopeless task of trying to find out some elastic quality in pounds, shillings, and pence.



"THERE WAS A RUSH TO THE DOOR."

A LEAP IN THE DARK.

BY FRANCES M. SCHOOLCRAFT.

PART FIFTH.

CHAPTER XVIII.

IT was far advanced in the summer. Louis Hamilton and Alicia were in a quiet little German town. Alicia was sitting alone, looking out across a blue river to a slope of vines crowned by a ruined castle. Alicia's color was deeper and brighter, and her eyes larger and more lustrous than ever; but the lines were sharper, and there was a contraction of the forehead, and a melancholy in the look new to them, and she leaned back in her chair with an air of weariness. Every now and then she bent forward, and looked along the white road, which she could see beyond the bridge, with eyes of eager expectation, and then, with a sigh of disappointment, fell back again. At length a single figure on foot appeared, walking slowly and loungingly towards the bridge. Alicia's face brightened. She watched the figure until it disappeared, and then waited until it reappeared below her window. Louis Hamilton looked up and saluted her, and soon after entered the room.

"Your 'two hours' were very long, Louis," said Alicia.

"I did not mean to be gone so long," said Louis, carelessly.

"I have been alone all day," sighed Alicia. "This is a dreary place."

"I think it very pleasant, and so did you yesterday."

"I had not sat eight hours alone yesterday."

"But, my dear Mrs. Creighton, let me ask you, why did you sit eight hours alone contrary to your own wishes? There is surely company enough to be found in Europe. You insist on going to these little towns, and I have accompanied you from one to the other with the greatest cheerfulness. You must see by this time that you do not like them, and had better go to Paris."

"And in Paris, I should never see you," said Alicia.

Louis sat down at his wife's feet and took her hand.

"My dear madam," he said, "do you remember that you did not marry me, but a name, and a likeness, and a fortune? All these you have, and, so far as I control any of them, they are at your service; but for me myself, I must remonstrate against your reproaches. You have no right to make any; and I think you would have found the real Francis Creighton even less attentive than I have been."

"Hush!" said Alicia. "Do not speak so loud. Some one may overhear."

"That is another thing," said Louis; "you are in such continual dread of detection that you have no peace. Better let me go to the antipodes, and own that Frank Creighton is dead."

Alicia laid her head on his shoulder.

"Louis!" she said, imploringly.

"Why do you call me 'Louis?' That is dangerous."

"Louis," she repeated, her voice trembling, "I believe you hate me."

"I do not believe I could hate a woman," said Louis; "especially a pretty and witty one. But you wouldn't have me make love to another man's wife, would you? Think what a position mine is. Consider that I am a soul animating Frank Creighton's body. Louis Hamilton's body is gone—he jumped into the ferry one dark night; and where Frank Creighton's soul is, Heaven only knows."

"Louis! Louis!" said Alicia, shuddering; "do not speak like that. You make me think of all sorts of ghastly things."

"Then do not reproach me continually," said Louis, changing his tone to a gentle and good-humored from a sarcastic one. "You know we are two wicked children, Alicia, and we have nothing to say to each other, if we find out more wickedness in each other. Tell me something that I can do, and I will do it. You say you have sat alone all day. Shall we go out?"

Alicia accepted this invitation with evident

pleasure. While she was preparing to go out, Louis was thinking to himself:

"She either does love me, or would have me think so; and if I had not married her as I did, I might love her; but I feel the humiliation of my position more and more every day. If I was hired for a husband, I was not hired for a lover. I cannot live in this way long."

Indeed, throughout the whole time since they had left New York Louis had maintained a very carefully balanced manner, which was the result of feeling, not of calculation. He was always attentive and courteous, but nothing more. His own personal expenses were as slight as possible. He learned from pride the economy prudence could never have taught him. In all matters involving expense he made Alicia pronounce, but his own movements otherwise he kept completely free. If he had been surly, ill-tempered or forbidding, Alicia could have found weapons to oppose him; but he was always the reverse, and she could not help liking him even when she was most hurt by his coldness. He was too pleasant a companion for a negligent husband, and yet a negligent husband any wife would have pronounced him to be, whatever the outside verdict might be.

When they were returning, as they passed over the bridge, a dark-bearded man was leaning against the parapet smoking. He gave Louis a stern and significant glance of recognition, raising his hat, as he did so. Louis acknowledged the salutation. Alicia asked who it was.

"I do not know," said Louis. "It is some one who either knows me or Francis Creighton."

A look of alarm immediately passed over Alicia's face. Louis saw it.

"There," he said, "that is a new proof of what I said. You are in constant terror."

Alicia denied this, but even as she denied, glanced backward, and saw that the man was following them. She did not comment upon it, but endeavored to persuade Louis to remain with her, after they reentered the inn. He promised to return soon, but would not stay.

"Do not put yourself in that man's way," said Alicia.

"Pshaw!" said Louis; "that would do no good. You must either abandon the situation or accept all its consequences. For my part, I find these *contretemps* amusing. I

have impudence enough—as a *Chevalier d'Industrie* should have."

He turned away, and Alicia burst into a flood of bitter tears. To add to the punishment she had prepared for herself, she had conceived a wild, jealous, irrational passion for the husband she had married under such singular circumstances, and his cool indifference was a constant thorn to her. In a morbid high-wrought nature like hers, love, come as it might, was sure to be a mischievous element.

Louis met the lounging of the bridge under the lime trees of the square, and waited to be addressed. The address came—familiar, polite, slightly ironical, and in French, as Louis was beforehand certain it would.

"I am glad to see you returned in such good health, Monsieur Creighton; but why have you not reported yourself to your regiment?"

"The devil!" thought Louis; "Mr. Creighton belonged to a regiment, did he?" And aloud he said, "Monsieur, a newly-married man may be pardoned, I hope, for not remembering anything that happened in a previous state of existence; if not, I shall not know how to apologize for forgetting you."

"I dare say that a *homme rangé* you had better forget as much as possible," said the Frenchman; "but *madame votre épouse* must be very charming, if she makes you forget Regnault Andilly, and that he has been waiting six months to settle an affair of honor with you."

"Ah!" said Louis. "Let me see, did I insult you, or did you insult me?"

"Are you appearing as *fureur* now, or has the fever affected your memory?"

"The fever did affect my memory very much," said Louis. ("An excellent hint, that, and luckily I can lie extempore on as slight a hint as any man.") "I forgot who I was, and everything else. You have heard of such cases, have you not?"

"Yes, I thought you had experienced a psychological phenomenon. Among the rest, you speak much better French than you did. You might pass for a Parisian."

"That is natural enough, for at first I could not speak any language but French, as that is my second native tongue. I am sorry we have a quarrel, M. Andilly. Let us fight it out as soon as possible, so as to resume friendly relations."

"You are devilish cool," said M. Andilly, staring at him. "Do you know that you

should have reported yourself at least a week ago? and that you are liable to arrest for breaking your leave? I recognized you, and followed you here to settle our affair, and see if you had resigned. I have heard nothing of it."

"I forgot all about it," said Louis. "It is embarrassing, but easily arranged."

"Perhaps you intend to claim the protection of your minister as an American citizen?"

"Monsieur Andilly, if we are not already belligerents, I should challenge you for not knowing that an American often makes his flag an excuse for getting into a fight, but never for getting out again. Was the Francis Creighton of former days a coward?"

"No, he was no coward; but among so many psychological changes, what may have happened I could not tell."

Louis could not tell if M. Andilly had any suspicion that he was not Francis Creighton or not. He thought he had not.

"When shall we fight?" he said, in reply.

"At once, if you please; and after we have fought, you must run."

"Run? Which way?"

"Towards the Rhine now. Next week, perhaps, away from it. Do you not know that France and Prussia stand now just as you and I do?"

"I have heard so," said Louis; "but I never read any newspapers now. What do you do so far from home at such a crisis?"

"I told you, I followed you."

"Then I ought to terminate your dangerous position in an enemy's country as soon as possible. If you please, let us fight at once. There is light enough left."

Captain Regnault Andilly had no objection to make, and Louis Hamilton rushed into a duel, of which he knew the cause as little as the consequence, with the same light-minded audacity that always characterized him. And then, educated in continental Europe as he was, a duel to him was a more commonplace affair than it might otherwise have been.

CHAPTER XIX.

WHILE Louis was conversing with Monsieur Andilly, Alicia had recovered from her paroxysm of feeling and fallen into the listlessness usual with her now. Not one of all her resources against ennui was of any avail. Her learning and her accomplishments alike disgusted her. If she took up a book, she laid it down again after a few minutes, un-

able to fix her attention upon it. She sat, therefore, alone, weary and discontented, when her maid came in and informed her that a young man had been there several times that day, asking for Mr. Creighton; and that he was there now, and begged that Mr. Creighton would be good enough to see him. The young man looked like a courier, said Nanita. Alicia was always made uneasy by any such announcement. She gave orders to admit the young man. He was a well-made young fellow enough, but not very well favored. He had thick foxy hair and beard, the one growing low on the forehead and the other high on the cheeks. His manner was very prepossessing—self-constituted, certainly—but very civil and deferential. He was a Russian named Anton Zadonskoi, and had formerly been Mr. Creighton's servant, he said. He was sure that Mr. Creighton would take him into his service, if he were there. He wished madame would engage him, so that he might leave his present master, who was going to start for St. Petersburg the next day.

"Mr. Creighton does not need a servant," said Alicia.

"But, madame," said Anton, softly, "I am sure he needs me. I went with him to America, and I never could understand why he left me in New York."

Alicia felt her heart thrill with terror.

"You went with him to America?" she said. "When?"

"In March, madame, when we last went over. He told me then not to tell anybody he was in New York. He went out to a country-house called Spence Hill. The next day I went to join him, and I saw a doctor—a Doctor Joliot—and he told me Mr. Creighton was very sick. I saw him, and he was very sick. He did not know me. I went away then with Doctor Joliot. I am sure Mr. Creighton would engage me again."

Something in the man's tone increased Alicia's fear. Why had John Creighton left all these loopholes open? Why had he not prevented this? This man knew more than he said. She caught a malicious gleam in his eyes as she looked up suddenly.

"How long had you been with Mr. Creighton?" she asked.

"A long time, madame. Ever since he left New York two years before. I was in his confidence. I know many things that no one else knows. I am sure he will be glad to take me back."

Alicia felt afraid of the man. There were certainly triumph and satisfaction under his smooth civil tones. Why could not she, with her wit, and wisdom, and position, overmatch a serving-man, however astute he might be, and whatever secrets he might possess? She must first learn how much the man did know or suspect.

"If he desired to retain you in his service, why did he dismiss you?"

"He never dismissed me, madame," said Anton. "He was ill, very ill. Does not madame know how very ill he was the day he married? So ill that he did not know what he was doing?"

Alicia arose. The man's insolence was becoming too great.

"Or rather, madame," continued Anton, still deferentially, standing with his cap in his hand before her, and speaking in the same respectful tone, "so ill that he did not know what you were doing."

Alicia's eyes flashed. The respectful manner changed, and Anton walked up to her and raised his finger.

"Don't call out, madame, or I shall speak before every one. I shall tell every one how Francis Creighton was poisoned at your house, while you married a man that was his living likeness."

Alicia had turned ashy pale. Now she uttered a cry.

"Poisoned! What do you mean? He was not!"

"I tell you yes!" said Anton. "Drugged to death, carried out by night and buried like a dog, while you—"

"It is not true!" gasped Alicia. "He is not dead."

"Where then is he?" asked Anton. "For this husband of yours is not he."

Alicia did not answer. The shock and horror of the revelation had struck her to the heart, and she dropped on a seat, her hands pressed to her breast, and breathing with pain. Anton ceased to speak, and looked at her silently. The spasm passed away, but left her white and trembling. Her first words were:

"For God's sake, tell me true! Is he dead?"

"It was all done exactly as I tell you," said Anton.

"I never knew it; and he—my husband—he did not know it."

"Where did you think Francis Creighton was? Where did your husband think he was?"

"He was told that Frank Creighton had died in Algiers," said Alicia. "I knew he had returned, but I thought he was in an insane asylum."

"That is enough. I see you speak the truth. I will not betray you—that is, I will not if you keep the secret from Louis Hamilton still. Do not tell him what I have said yet. I will tell him myself when he needs to know."

"I will not; I will not tell him."

"Remember, then. I will send your maid."

Anton went out and Nanita came in. Alicia passed a miserable night, for Louis did not return. He sent a note saying he had unexpectedly been called upon to fulfil a previous engagement. This note added jealousy to Alicia's other distress. Louis was pursuing some stray amour while she was suffering here. She was sure of it. If Louis made a chance acquaintance in their journeys with an attractive woman, if he laughed and talked to a pretty peasant girl, Alicia was jealous. It can be easily imagined that this did not go far towards winning his heart. During her sleepless night she heard a disturbance in the streets, the tramp of horses and the rolling of wheels. In the morning, Anton, once more deferential and respectful, informed her that the town had been garrisoned by the Prussians. And Louis had not yet returned. She looked apprehensively at Anton, and wondered if he had any knowledge of Louis's movements. She asked him at last. Anton would inquire. Anton did inquire. He learned that Louis had been arrested, as well as a Frenchman in whose company he was, on suspicion of being French spies. Under these circumstances, Anton advised Mrs. Creighton to leave the place for one less likely to be disturbed by the impending war. Alicia would not leave while Louis was in danger, she said. There was no danger, Anton respectfully urged. Mr. Creighton was an American citizen. Alicia consented to go. She dared not oppose Anton. Her servant was her master ever since the revelation concerning Frank Creighton. She travelled to Brussels as speedily as possible, and remained there waiting for news of Louis. Her anxiety was dispelled by Louis's appearance.

Louis had fought his duel with Regnault Andilly without fatal consequences on either side; but their arrest had immediately followed, the authorities maintaining that they gave no good account of themselves. How

Captain Andilly's imprisonment had terminated, Louis did not know. His own had been dissolved by his American citizenship.

"An American citizen!" he thought; "my father was an Englishman, my mother a French woman, and I was born in Victor Emmanuel's city of Nice; and although I have been in America, I never became a citizen. I have a great mind to act on Francis Creighton's French commission. How is it that they do not know he is dead?"

When Louis was half way to Brussels he was met by Anton, who he learned had been his servant formerly. Anton said not a word to Louis of the story he had told Alicia. Louis thought there was something peculiar in Anton's manner; that he observed him with great attention, and kept a furtive watch upon him. He drew his own conclusions: he thought Anton was appointed to maintain a surveillance over him, in order to preserve the safety of the pious Hohenzollern's dominions from any audacious attempt a Franco-American might make—possibly under bad Bourbon influence. He feigned to think nothing of the kind, however, and conversed with Anton in his usual debonair manner.

When Louis rejoined Alicia she was urgent for him to go at once to England.

"I will accompany you to England, if you please," said Louis; "although I advise you to return to New York. As for myself, I think I shall join the French array. I am a Frenchman, if I am anything, and I shall be in an honest position there at least."

"Will you desert me, Louis?"

"Do you not see that we had better separate?" said Louis. "Plainly, I am tired of my position, and you ought to be tired of yours. Away from me you are quite safe. With me you are in constant danger of detection."

Alicia cast an anxious and searching glance at him.

"Has any one suspected you, Louis?" she asked. "Perhaps this man Anton—"

Louis laughed.

"I do not know how long he may have been in Francis Creighton's service, but I do not think it can have been very long; for he does not seem to find any dissimilarity. No; I think I could play the comedy out to the end. That is one reason why I am tired of it. It wants interest. Besides, I do not want to be a living lie all my life. I want to be Louis Hamilton again. He was a scamp,

I admit, but he had a spark of grace about him. Let us part friends, but part."

Alicia turned away, and covered her eyes with her hand; but he saw the tears dropping through her fingers.

"You are very harsh, very cruel," she said, in a broken voice; "do you not know that I shall be all alone, if you leave me? You promised to help and protect me; you stand between me and John Creighton now, and you do not know how I dread meeting him again. I care for no one and nothing on earth but you—and you—you—" her voice was lost in sobs.

Louis walked slowly up and down the room with a troubled face. He approached Alicia and laid his hand on her shoulder.

"Alicia," he said, "listen to me."

She grew quiet and listened.

"If you really love me, if you wish to be my wife—do you?"—Alicia caught his hand and drew it to her lips, but made no other answer. It was a sufficient one. "Then," he continued, "you must take my name, and share my fortune. I am nothing, and have nothing; and I am content to have it so. I love riches and ease as well as any one can, and once thought I would do anything to secure them. I have tried the experiment, and think now that I would rather be a free beggar than live the life I do. If you will go back to New York and confess this fraud, we will remain husband and wife. Otherwise, I will go my own way, and you must go yours. I will not betray you, but I will be no partner in it any longer."

"I am ready, Louis; I am ready to throw aside the deceit, but—need we return to New York, and face every one there?"

"Yes; we need return and face John Creighton, or we shall not know that the truth has been told—and it must be told. Besides, my mother and sister need me."

"What—what will they do?" said Alicia. "Will not there be a—a penalty?"

"I am not counting consequences," said Louis. "I neither know nor care what the result may be."

Alicia was silent. She longed to tell Louis of the dreadful story Anton had told, but she dared not. She knew that Anton watched her. She remembered his charge, and dared not disobey it, lest he should discover it. And yet, if Louis were suspected of complicity in this murder—if she were—

"Decide quickly," said Louis; "I do not see how you can endure our being merely

handcuffed together like a pair of galley-slaves."

"I cannot," said Alicia. "Louis, you would rather leave me than have me consent!"

"You are wrong," said Louis. "I would rather have you consent. What confidence can we have in each other now? Besides, it is wearing you out. You are growing to be a shadow of what you were."

"It shall be as you will," said Alicia. "I can endure anything with you to help me and support me; nothing if you leave me. Let us go home and confess everything."

Louis bent down and kissed her forehead.

"Now you are my wife, so do not fear; I will stand between you and all evil consequences, as far I can."

At this point of the conversation Anton stole away from his listening post in the next door, saying to himself:

"He knew nothing of it. So much the better."

Not many minutes after, Louis called Anton, and informed him that he was going to America. Anton begged to accompany him. Louis replied that he had no reason for refusing except that he could not afford an attendant of Anton's value.

"You would not object to my taking passage in the same vessel, would you, Mr. Creighton?"

"If I did, it would be useless, since the vessel is free to all passengers; but call me Mr. Hamilton, if you do."

Anton looked up.

"Do they wish to detain you, monsieur?" he asked.

"No," said Louis. He was not going to explain to Anton why he was to call him Hamilton, and little knew that Anton knew the whole. He did notice, however, that after this Anton's manner changed. It lost its suspicious watchfulness. He supposed it was because the man had found out beyond a doubt that he intended leaving Europe at once.

CHAPTER XX.

MRS. MOORE was sitting by her parlor window when she saw Colonel Yates approaching. She started back from the window, saying to herself:

"There he comes again, and he will be asking me all sorts of questions about what could have become of the boy. I don't see why he doesn't get married again, and not

spend his life bothering after that child. I won't see him."

An impatient ring made Mrs. Moore run up stairs into her daughter's room. Jinny had been away from New York for some time, and Colonel Yates had not known where she was. Mrs. Moore guessed that if Colonel Yates saw Virginia he would forget any other business that might have brought him there. She knew that Virginia had for some reason avoided Colonel Yates latterly, so she deliberately told Jinny that Mr. Hesketh the manager was down stairs. Jinny went down unsuspiciously, and walked into the room. Colonel Yates, who had asked for Mrs. Moore, did not look disappointed at the exchange. Jinny was cold and unconscious, and avoided all personal subjects. Not so Colonel Yates, who, with more sincere interest than complimentary politeness, looking at Jinny's pretty face, told her she was pale.

"If I had known you were here, I would have put on my rouge," laughed Jinny; "I thought it was Mr. Hesketh, and it was not worth while to waste any illusions on him."

"You do not need any rose color to make you lovely for me, Jinny," said Colonel Yates. "I am only afraid that you are breaking your heart for a man that isn't worth it."

"What man is?" said Jinny, with a coquettish look. "I have no heart to break."

But she had a heart to ache even while she laughed.

"You have mine," said Colonel Yates, serio-comically.

"Your heart is like the sea—always breaking and never the worse."

Colonel Yates wasted more time on equivocal flirtation. He took both of Jinny's hands, and said:

"Jinny, you know I love you."

Jinny started up, but her hands were held fast, and she could not run away if she had meant to do it. Her cheeks were not pale any longer. She hung her head, and said, almost in a whisper:

"I am afraid you do."

"Why afraid? Will my love do you any harm, do you think?"

Jinny shook her head slowly.

"I have let you talk that way too much, Colonel Yates," she said.

"I agree with you there. I have talked too much, and you think I don't mean anything."

"No—but—do not say anything more. I must not hear it."

"Why not? Because of Frank Creighton? You are going to forget him."

"I cannot forget him, and I ought not, if I could—because—I am going to tell you a secret that I never told anybody, and that I promised never to tell; and I would not tell you, if I had not let you think that—" Jinny stopped, then added, shortly and almost sharply, "I am Frank Creighton's wife."

Colonel Yates dropped Jinny's hands at this unexpected announcement, and, after a steady look at her for a moment, turned round and walked up to a photograph of Abraham Lincoln with an air of sudden and peculiar interest.

"*His wife?*" Jinny heard him say to himself. "Is he a fool or a knave, or both?"

Not knowing what else to do, Jinny began to cry. Colonel Yates came back again and took his seat with a free and cheerful countenance.

"So you are Frank's wife, are you, Jinny? How long since?"

"O, years and years!" said Jinny.

"Humph!" said Colonel Yates. "Frank is only twenty-three now."

"He was only eighteen then," said Jinny, with a downcast face.

"Humph!" said Colonel Yates, again. "The sooner you get rid of such a husband the better, it seems to me. You should have told this before, and prevented—"

"I know it now; but I believed Frank would come back and own it himself. He always said he would come back when he was twenty-three, and his own master. But now I cannot tell any one without making a great deal of trouble."

"True; it would not do to accuse him of bigamy, you mean?"

"I will not do it," said Jinny. "If Frank Creighton has forgotten that I am his wife, I have not forgotten it, and I will not forget it. And you can say," she added, frankly but blushingly, "if I ever did forget it, for I have let you say more than I ever did any one else."

Colonel Yates laughed a monosyllabic laugh.

"No, Jinny," he said, "I can conscientiously swear that you left all the love-making to me, and only kindly allowed me to make a fool of myself. It was not exactly fair, but I have no reason to complain."

"But you must not think I am a heartless flirt," said Jinny, looking distressed and imploring.

"O no!" said Colonel Yates; "you thought it was only diamond cut diamond—that I was amusing myself, and you would do the same. It is all right."

"You don't think so?" said Jinny.

"Never mind what I think," said Colonel Yates. "Perhaps I had better keep my thoughts to myself, Mrs. Frank Creighton."

"You shall not think I was only amusing myself," said Jinny. "I am afraid I was beginning to like you too well—but—you know, now, I must not do that," she added, retreating, as Colonel Yates seemed inclined to make capital of this confession.

"And you want me to believe you are not a heartless flirt, do you?" said Colonel Yates. "Do you mean to tell me that you are going to remain constant to his memory, and make yourself his widow while he is alive?"

"Yes," said Jinny, steadily; "you have used the right word. I am his widow while he is alive; I cannot and I will not accuse him—"

"Do you *love* him?"

"I am his wife."

"That does not answer me."

"It does. It is all the answer I can give you to anything you say; and that is why I told you; for, if I had cared nothing for you, I need not have made any excuse at all."

"Certainly not," said Colonel Yates. "I will see if Frank makes as satisfactory an answer to what I say."

Jinny looked frightened.

"You must not quarrel with him!"

"Quarrel? I don't mean to quarrel. But there are other people interested in this besides you and I. Good-by, Jinny. O, his life is safe; don't be afraid. Good-by!"

Colonel Yates went out, and Jinny cried.

"I thought I loved Frank," she said to herself. "When I think of him I do—why should I be so unhappy if I do not? but—" and Jinny cried again—"Randolph Yates loves me, and I am so lonely."

Randolph Yates did love her, and he was in a very unsettled and tempestuous state of mind over the very tangled shape his relations with her had assumed. Love in idleness was one thing. Marriage, bigamy, divorce—these are other things, and do not flow into poetry so easily. Frank's marriage to Alicia was a double and treble cheat. He must be spoken with, say what Jinny might, and though Colonel Yates resolved and resolved not to resort to violence to show his indignation, he yet cherished a hidden germ

of hope that he might be tempted beyond his strength to break his resolution, and perhaps Frank's head.

As he was leaving the house he encountered Bill Moore. Bill said he wanted to speak to him about something very private and particular. Colonel Yates's head was full of the news he had lately heard, and he thought it must be that.

"About this Creighton business?" he asked.

Bill nodded.

"You remember my going out to Bohmerwald that night in March?"

"Yes. What has that to do with it?"

"I meant to tell you. Not here, though, for mother is always behind the door somewhere."

"Why, William Moore, how can you say so!" said Mrs. Moore, appearing.

Bill only laughed at this rebuttal of his words, and said:

"I come to get some traps of mine from here, colonel, and if you'll be at home, or somewhere else in half an hour, I'll be with you."

"Come to my office," said Colonel Yates. "I'll be there."

He went out into the street, and went to Wall Street prepared to be prompt and irrefutable on the first occasion. He met an occasion in the person of the Hon. Robespierre Clinch, U. S. S. Now, Mr. Senator Clinch had wronged Colonel Yates in that he had just mentioned John Creighton's name for a foreign appointment, after he had promised his support to a friend of Colonel Yates's. In Colonel Yates's ebullient state this was enough. He stopped, and then and there gave the senator such an incisive rebuke for his ingratitude and perfidy that he quaked; for fall was coming on, and a man like Dolph Yates, popular with high and low, who had raised a regiment on his own call a few years before, and who was hand in glove with many magnates of the council and the crowd, might make wicked work at the polls in November, if he were so minded. Little did the senator think that Jinny Moore was directly answerable for that blast of indignation, accustomed as he was to trace the secret springs of human action.

After this Colonel Yates went into his office, and had half a mind to send out to buy a million in gold, still further to relieve his mind, when he was luckily prevented from inaugurating a fit of delirium tremens in the money market by the entrance of Bill Moore.

The door was closed, and Bill, for the first time, gave Colonel Yates an account of all that had passed in the vault on that night.

"I swear," he said (at least he did not say so, but he did it), "I had no idea it felt so bad to be scared. I'll never be so rough on a coward again. It almost killed me to be frightened once, and I don't see how a man can stand it often."

Colonel Yates, with all his serious interest in Bill's narration, could not help laughing at this. Bill took the laugh in perfectly good part, and went on to say that he had been unwilling to confess before that he had been so much alarmed. He had told Colonel Yates that he had not found anything. He had found something, and lost it again.

"I thought I might find it again, and I've searched and searched, but it is of no use. Then I thought Mr. Creighton may have found it, and I took a look among his things. I did not find that, but I have found something you may like to see. Look here."

He put some papers in Colonel Yates's hand. Yates looked over them and uttered an ejaculation.

"Where did you find these, Bill?"

"Never mind, colonel. You had better not know. I found 'em. That's enough."

Colonel Yates looked at Bill with a face of concern, and laid his hand on his shoulder.

"Billy! Billy!" he said. "I am afraid you are going to the devil."

"I never was anywhere else, colonel."

"You obstinate young heretic! you might be a rich and respectable man in ten years, if you would only do your best instead of your worst."

"I'd like well enough to be rich," said Bill, "but I don't care a dash for being respectable. If I was rich, Colonel, I'd like to live pretty much as you do."

"Confound you, Bill! do you mean to say that I'm not respectable?"

"You know you ain't what people mean when they say a respectable man, colonel."

Colonel Yates laughed again.

"I am afraid your ideas of respectability are too high to be reached; but, seriously, very seriously, why don't you keep a little more in the safe path, Bill?"

"O, what's the use of talking? I shall never be anybody but Bill Moore, do what I may. Respectable! what would a respectable man say if I came and wanted employment? What would a respectable girl say if I wanted to marry her?"

"Yes,' ten to one. Respectable girls often fancy very black sheep."

"I know that," said Bill. "I'm not thinking of the same kind of girl you are. What is the reason a rule wont work both ways? Now, if you make love to my sister, it would be all natural enough; no one would think anything of it; but what would you say if you found me making love to your sister?"

Colonel Yates was conscious that such an episode might excite some consternation in him, and answered, with a weak evasion, that he had no sister.

"It would be all the same, if you had; I mean—you know what I mean, well enough."

"I suppose you mean that you have fallen in love with a young woman who thinks she is better than you are."

"So she is!" said Bill, indignantly. "I wouldn't give much for a girl that was not better than I am; and this one is in every way. I wont tell you any more, colonel. You will only laugh at me, and sometimes I laugh at myself."

"I will not laugh at you, Bill; but you do not act in a way to raise yourself to the level of a very superior girl, you know."

"To be sure I know it, and I can't; it's no use to talk about it. I was born what I am."

Colonel Yates said no more, but sat and turned the papers Bill had given him over in his fingers thoughtfully. Bill asked him, at length, if they were good for anything.

"They are of very great importance," said Colonel Yates. "Greater than you know, or than I quite understand myself. I am almost sorry to have them, however, on your account."

"Never mind me," said Bill. "If they are of any use, keep them."

Bill got up to go. He steadily refused to say any more concerning the manner in which he became possessed of the papers, but Colonel Yates did not need to ask. So great was his opinion of the importance of their contents, that he did not hesitate to keep them. As soon as Bill had gone, Colonel Yates put the papers in his note-case and went out to Bohmerwald.

CHAPTER XXI.

COLONEL YATES went directly to Sullivan Howe's house, determined, if necessary, to force his way in. He had no need, for Howe was out of doors when he arrived. When he saw Colonel Yates approaching, with the

evident intention of addressing him, he turned away and walked toward the house. Colonel Yates sprang forward, intercepted him, and seized him by the arm.

"You must hear my errand," he said.

Howe's eyes flashed, and he looked for a moment as if he would strike the intruder to the ground. Then he said:

"Colonel Yates, because you are my son's friend, I will stay here for five minutes; after that you must not try this experiment again. I have suffered the penalty of guilt, and I choose for the rest of my life to see only those who believe in my innocence."

"I do," said Colonel Yates; "more than that, I come to help you prove it."

"What do you say?" asked Howe, suddenly changing his manner; "you come to help me prove it? Do you come to tell me where Caroline Maitland is?"

"No," said Colonel Yates. "Caroline Maitland? I remember? She could not be found, and her father swore that she was at home at the time you said you met her."

"I always thought you knew where she was."

"You were wrong then," said Colonel Yates.

"Every one supposed that you were the cause of her disappearance."

"I need not tell you that what every one believes is a lie. I had to swear that this was so every day once, and with no effect. The only real foundation for the story was Henrietta's jealousy and John Creighton's pretending she had cause. I never spoke a word of serious gallantry to Cad Maitland in my life; and she was too proud to risk her reputation by a flirtation with a married man of such very unstable sentiments as mine."

"I think she has been in the neighborhood lately."

"Why?" said Colonel Yates, eagerly. "Who saw her?"

"No one that ever knew her. If it is she, she is a raving maniac; and the theme of her raving is a murder and a murderer." He looked steadily at Colonel Yates as he spoke.

"A maniac? Poor Cad!" said Colonel Yates. "I am sorry for her own sake and for mine also, for I have reason to think that she could tell me something I want to know. But my business here is on your account. Tell me about Caroline Maitland."

Howe briefly narrated Leonore's adventure with the madwoman, and added his belief that the woman was Caroline Maitland.

"That is strange," said Colonel Yates.

"She went to the place where Domcroft was found. Do you ever go there?"

"Sometimes," said Howe.

"Let us go there now," said Colonel Yates. "I have never seen it since that day."

Howe answered by saying:

"How long have you believed in my innocence, Colonel Yates?"

"I always doubted," said Colonel Yates. "Wait until we reach the place; I will tell you as we go along why I am here to-day."

As they walked across the field, Yates said:

"I have a confession to make. I have an accomplice in a burglary—an accessory after the act."

"What do you mean?"

"What I say," said Colonel Yates; "and here is a portion of the plunder."

Howe looked at the papers which had come from Bill Moore. His face changed.

"In God's name, where did you get these?"

Colonel Yates told him. The tale brought them to the stile where Leonore had rested on the night of her adventure.

"Let us go in," said Howe. "It is the best spot to speak of what we do now."

They reached the spot. Howe pointed to the hollow in the ground.

"There he lay when I first saw him. Look at those broken bushes. They were broken on that day. That twisted sapling was bent down by his weight. Do you see that little spring under the roots of that tree? It was as red as the blood that stained it."

Colonel Yates stood looking down. A strange sensation seized him, growing out of the spot at which he gazed. He fancied he saw the stiffening corpse, and the slow dark blood creeping among the wood, grass and flowers. It was plain before him, and through the shape he saw the ground below at the same time. He drew his hand across his eyes and shuddered.

"There is something wicked about this place yet," he said, and tried not to look again, for whenever he did so he saw that ghastly outline beginning to form again. He would have turned away, but felt as it were the touch of a cold hand on his neck restraining him. He saw that his companion was looking at him curiously.

"This place affects you oddly," Howe said.

"It does," replied Colonel Yates, "in more ways than one. I have at this moment a more distinct impression of my wife upon me than I ever had at any time except when she was actually in my presence."

As he said this, he again forcibly withdrew his eyes from the spot, and they fell upon something that glittered in the dark hollow of the birch tree. He pointed to it.

"Do you see anything there?" he asked.

"A chain and locket," said Howe; and he bent and picked them up. The locket contained a miniature. Howe had scarcely looked at it when he passed it to Colonel Yates.

"Domcroft himself!" said Colonel Yates.

"Did you put it there?"

"No; I never saw it before. It has not lain there long. Could it have been in this woman's possession whom you think is Caroline Maitland? Could it be Domcroft who was Caroline's lover? Could it have been Caroline who murdered him?"

"No woman's hand could have struck that blow," said Howe. "If he had been shot or stabbed it would have been different; but I never knew a woman to attempt a murder with a downright blow such as killed George Domcroft."

"Will you answer me a question? Whom do you suspect?"

"That question I shall never answer until I can bring him to confession. I will never turn against another man the weapon that slew me. I might name a name. I might bring proof after proof, and yet all the time, ten years of my life would call out to me to beware lest I wronged an innocent man, innocent in this, though guilty in a thousand ways beside."

Colonel Yates made no answer to this, but commencing from the time that he had heard of a paper having been buried with his wife, he told Howe all that had passed, and his conversation with Bill Moore that day, and finally handed Howe the papers. As Howe looked at them a deep color suffused his face, and, looking up, he said:

"I have doubted the justice of Heaven, but it will yet vindicate itself. Keep these papers. They must not appear from my hands; and come with me to my house, for I have something to tell you. Keep the locket, too."

CHAPTER XXII.

LEONORE HAMILTON and her mother were sitting in consultation. They had received a letter from Louis. He wrote from Europe, telling them he was coming home immediately, and enclosed a letter to Mrs. Hamilton from a relative of her late husband, which he had found lying in the hands of one of their

cousins. Mrs. Hamilton opened the letter with great hopes of some good fortune having arisen. It was no particular good-fortune. It was merely a formal notice of the death of the eldest brother of her late husband. Mrs. Hamilton was almost indignant. She had never known anything of these people. She had not even known their name. They might at least have told her what had become of her husband, she said. She threw the letter down, and Leonore picked it up. She read the signature:

"Domerost?" she said. "Had my father relatives of that name?"

"I know nothing of his English relatives," said Mrs. Hamilton. "They did not like his marrying a French woman. He was not on good terms with them for a long time. When he went back to England it was because his grandfather, an old man, was dying. Sir George—stay—what name is that, Leonore? Domeroste? That was his name. Sir George Domeroste."

The name of Domerost already stood out in relief in Leonore's mind. She had not time to think what connection there could be here, when Clarence Howe entered. He would have preferred to see Leonore alone, but Mrs. Hamilton seldom permitted that. Leonore smiled often at this return to rigid etiquette after the disfranchisement that poverty had given her, but never remonstrated. Clarence therefore made his call brief, but gave Leonore a note, asking her to come out presently and walk with him. He had something to say. Leonore had no hesitation in complying, and joined Clarence at the foot of the garden. He at once showed her the locket. Leonore recognized it.

"And this is your father?" asked Clarence.

"Yes."

"When did he die? Tell me all you know about him."

Leonore told the little she knew, and at last mentioned the letter that had arrived that day, and the name of Domerost.

"It is so then," said Clarence. "Leonore, this is the face of George Domerost—my father recognized it, and so did Colonel Yates."

"My poor father!" said Leonore. "Was it so he died?"

"And my father," said Clarence, in a low voice, "is called his murderer."

Leonore started, and shrank back.

"You need not tell me that this parts us, Leonore," said Clarence. "I have been making my mind ready for this."

"I would not tell you so, if it were possible to say—we need not part."

"I know it," said Clarence. "My own strong belief in my father's innocence is not enough. It must be clear before the world, before you can hold him innocent. When you heard the story, and when you sympathized so deeply with my hope and my pain for him, we did not think that our own happiness was at stake. I am rightly punished for forgetting my first resolution, and for dreaming of drawing another life under the same cloud that has overshadowed mine."

"My life was always overshadowed until I met you," said Leonore. "For that you must not blame yourself. Let us believe yet that he is innocent, and that his innocence will be proved. But if it is not, Clarence, what we shall bear will be but little compared to what he has borne. Do not despond yet. It is strange that we should be brought here to the very spot."

Clarence didn't remind Leonore that she had been led even to the very spot where her father's corpse had lain. He did not derive much comfort from hope. He had almost lost hopes of seeing his father's name cleared. Lately, Sullivan had spoken vaguely of a brighter prospect, but he had told him nothing definitely. He only felt that his fate was doubly hard to bear now, after he had once admitted love into his life, that he must cast it out again.

"I may be your friend yet," he said.

"After a little time," said Leonore. "But, Clarence, if this goes on for years, and you find that you can be happier in forgetting me, you must not think you are bound to me."

"You take it coldly, Leonore."

Leonore did not answer him. She could not tell him that the hour in which it required all her resolution to part with him, was not the hour to yield to her love and sorrow. Clarence saw her mute look and said:

"Forgive me, Leonore. I am very bitter against everything now. Why need this be so? Because the world says it must. Because one shameful wrong has been done, a whole generation of wrongs must follow it. Do not answer me. I am not pleading against separation. I know it must be so. But I do not feel that it should be so—except for this, that I should never have known how much I love you if I had not to lose you. If ever we can meet again as we have, then I shall know. We are at the gate. Farewell. When shall we meet again?"

BELGIAN POLITICS.

Littell's Living Age (1844-1896); Jun 24, 1871; 1412; ProQuest

pg. 820

From The Spectator.

BELGIAN POLITICS.

ALTHOUGH the recent war seemed at the outset full of peril for Belgium, one of its indirect results has apparently been to place that country in a more secure position than it previously occupied. The apprehensions which were excited by the publication of the Secret Treaty were certainly not without foundation, and it is easy to conceive that, if the conflict had been for a time more evenly balanced, the Germans might have been tempted to sacrifice Belgium to France as the price of territorial concessions to themselves. As matters have turned out, the Power from which Belgium had always most to fear has been utterly overthrown, while at the same time the other belligerent is now

bound by the strongest ties of interest to defend the independence of the little kingdom. It is not improbable that, if the French could get over their present troubles, they would seek some means of recovering their military prestige and making good their losses. In that case prudential considerations would doubtless direct attention to their Northern rather than their Eastern neighbour. A little reflection, however, should convince them that the whole conditions of an attack on Belgium have been changed, greatly to their disadvantage. No bribe can now be offered to procure the acquiescence of Prussia, who not desiring Belgium for herself, has quite as cogent reasons as England for keeping France out of it. Even a strong Power would think twice before assailing a country which could promptly array such a force as Belgium placed on her frontier last summer, with the citadel of Antwerp as a base, and such an ally as England, to say nothing of Prussia, in the background. The peculiar position of Belgium exposes her, however, to greater dangers from within than from without. It is her curious fate to oscillate between the happiness of a country which has no history of its own, and the unhappiness of being unable to keep clear of the historical developments of other countries. In one way or another this most quiet and unobtrusive of States seems to get entangled in almost every great Continental movement. While its geographical situation made it at one time the fighting ground of Europe, its free constitution now renders it the favourite resort of all classes of political agitators. Republican conspirators against the Empire and Imperialist conspirators against the Republic, Socialists, Democrats, and Ultramontanes, alike flock thither to concert their plans, and to establish on safe neutral soil the head-quarters of their respective organizations. Much of the unpopularity of our own country abroad is due to the divergence between our political system and the more or less rigid despots of the Continent; and this feeling is naturally intensified in the case of Belgium, from the mere fact of contiguity of frontier. The maintenance of free constitutional government by a small State under such circumstances is an enterprise of considerable hazard. Prince Bismarck a few years ago denounced the "nest of democrats" at Brussels; the late Emperor Napoleon repeatedly protested against the liberty accorded to the Belgian press; and even an English Minister once gave equivocal

countenance to these complaints. The prudence and loyalty of the Belgian Government have hitherto preserved them from the consequences of this irritation, without any infringement of the liberal principles of their Constitution. But their task is obviously one of great delicacy and difficulty, and there are symptoms of a disposition on the part of some of their guests to abuse the hospitality accorded to them. Moreover, though the Belgians themselves are naturally a slow and stedfast people, it is impossible that they can altogether resist the moral influences of such an invasion of political agitators and propagandists.

Two strong currents may be traced in the recent course of Belgian politics. While, on the one hand, fear and abhorrence of democratic excesses have of late years been strengthening the position of the Clerical party, on the other hand the open ascendancy of that party is now producing a partial reaction the other way. The Liberals are divided into two camps — the moderate Liberals, who were last year driven from office by the Clerical party; and the Democrats, who by their violence contributed in a large measure to the downfall of the late Government, and the elevation of the Clericals in their place. The relation of the various parties to each other and to the public is very clearly illustrated in the debates on the Reform Bill lately introduced by the Ministry. It would appear to be a law of nature that Conservative Governments should produce democratic Reform Bills. M. D'Anethan, the chief of the Clerical party, who are the Conservatives of Belgium, has taken advantage of being in office to effect a manipulation of the provincial and communal constituencies so as to bring them more completely under the control of the priests. With this view he proposed a sweeping reduction in both those franchises which, like the Parliamentary franchise, are based on annual payments of direct taxes. The qualification for votes at the election of Provincial Councils (akin to our Quarter Sessions) was lowered from 42 francs 32 centimes to 20 francs; while in the case of elections for the Communal Council or Local Board a uniform qualification of 10 francs was substituted for the graduated scale according to population, running from 15 francs up to 42 francs 32 centimes, which has hitherto been established. This measure was opposed by the whole body of Liberals, but on entirely different and indeed antagonistic grounds. While the Democrats

complained that it did not go far enough in the reduction of the franchise, the moderate Liberals or Whigs resisted it because it went too far. Nothing would satisfy the former but universal suffrage, qualified only by an educational test as to reading and writing. M. Frère Orban and the moderate Liberals were equally opposed to this democratic project and to the Government Bill—to the one because it amounted practically to an unrestricted suffrage, the condition as to reading and writing being illusory and inoperative, and to the other because it must lead directly and inevitably to the same result. M. Frère Orban borrowed Mr. Lowe's arguments, and almost his words, in deprecating any departure from the established system. If a reduction were once commenced it could not, he contended, be arrested short of universal suffrage; and he pointed to France as an illustration of the fatal effects of that "gangrene" of national life. The Ministry resented the proposed educational condition, which, however insufficient as a genuine test of intelligence and integrity, would at least have had the effect of cutting off a good many of the ignorant peasants on whom they reckoned to counteract the influence of the middle classes; but they were perhaps not particularly afraid of universal suffrage if separated from this invidious test. At any rate, confident of their power to reduce the suffrage just so far as and no further than they pleased, they disregarded M. Frère Orban's warning and carried their Bill.

There can be no doubt that for the present the Clericals are triumphant, and that under the new law they will be able to beat up an overwhelming majority in the polling-booths. If they are content to exercise their power moderately, they may probably continue in office for several years to come. Recent events in France have strongly confirmed the hostility of the great body of the people to democratic principles, while the entry of the Italians into Rome has excited sympathy for the Pope. It is, however, extremely improbable that the dominant party will exercise the self-denial which discretion would advise. The vivid description which M. Prevost-Paradol drew in one of his lectures of the hold of the Church—not merely the spiritual but the material hold—on the provincial towns of France, is still more applicable to Belgium. A large part of the whole fee simple of the country belongs to the Church. A still larger proportion of the population is directly or indirectly dependent on the clergy or under

their influence in a pecuniary sense. The misfortunes which have befallen the Church in Spain, Italy, and France have led to a vast accumulation of clerical property in Belgium, as well as a large clerical immigration. Belgium, in short, has become the strong-box of the Church, and the head-quarters of Ultramontane activity. But already this has given rise to a considerable amount of irritation, and it will be strongly resented by certain classes if carried much further. The outcry which was raised a few years ago in Ghent and some other Belgian cities against the great estates of the Church and the monopoly of the soil which it was alleged to be bent on acquiring, should serve as a warning of the danger of too conspicuous a parade either of wealth or influence. It may be assumed, however, that the Ministry would not have been at the pains to strengthen their position, and to secure the command of a large body of voters, unless they had some designs in view for which this force was wanted; and in any case the consciousness of power supplies a constant temptation to exert it. Moreover, the waning influence of the Church in other countries, and the open mutinies which have followed the proclamation of the Infallibility dogma, may be supposed to require some striking manifestation of strength and vitality as a counterpoise. It is not the loss of the mere temporal revenues of the Papal States which the Church laments, but the loss of the subjects over whom it could rule with that direct temporal authority which it still claims to exercise throughout the world. It will not perhaps be surprising if an attempt is made to get up a visible and emphatic demonstration of this authority in Belgium, as some compensation for the falling away of Rome. There can hardly be a doubt as to the ultimate result of any movement in this direction. The great body of the people of Belgium, though leaning for the moment towards the Church, are not disposed to be ranged as vassals at its heels. If the clericals have discernment, they will understand that it is not love for them, but abhorrence of democratic excesses, which has placed them in office, and that the only condition on which they can keep their power is not to use it to freely. If they attempt to push their victory too far, they will only be playing the game of the Democrats, just as the Democrats have of late been playing the game of the Church. The best hope for Belgium is apparently, that the moderate Liberals may regain office in

order to mediate between the two extremes.

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ERICA.*

TRANSLATED FOR THE LIVING AGE FROM THE GERMAN OF

FRAU VON INGERSLEBEN.

XLIV.

THE PORTFOLIO.

WERNER naturally prolonged his stay at Altenborn, nay, he remained until Sidonie returned to Dorneck, for both Countess Rodenwald and the baroness thought it better for her to spend the time of her betrothal in her own home. For this reason Fritz again received an extension of his leave of absence, that he might accompany Sidonie on her journey. The latter found it very hard to leave Altenborn — the suffering she had endured there formed a special bond — but the thought of living so near her relatives consoled her, and made the separation easier for all.

Letters had been instantly sent to Count Hardeck, but while Sidonie merely informed her guardian that she would yield to his wishes, Werner entered into full particulars. The count's answer this time came very quickly. He cordially expressed his surprise and pleasure, but could not entirely refrain from censuring Sidonie's conduct.

"God must keep a special watch over you capricious young ladies," he wrote, "that you do not cause yourselves greater misery. There is something mad, you must pardon your old relative this strong expression, in violently opposing a marriage for which there are a thousand sensible reasons, and then throwing yourself unasked into the arms of the same man, when all these sensible motives have disappeared, and the match has become a very imprudent one. And, moreover, you pretend to yield submissively to my will, while on the contrary, you have followed your own obstinate caprices, and the fact that God, in his goodness, has allowed your folly to have such a fortunate result, does not alter the affair in the least. I am heartily glad that I can speedily re-

sign my authority over you to Werner Meerburg; he can see whether he will manage you any better than a gouty old man. But may God bless you, my dear child, and make you as happy as I sincerely hope you will be."

After the departure of the visitors, the baroness's drawing-room became far quieter, yet the latter missed them far more than Erica and Elmar, though even now a shadow sometimes flitted over the latter's horizon of life and love, that he could not instantly drive away, and which made Erica the more anxious because she vainly asked its cause.

The ambassador, it is true, had granted Werner's request with friendly zeal, but hitherto had been unable to give any favorable report of the inquiries set on foot. Katharina, probably by Wehlen's advice, kept perfectly quiet, but remained on a war footing with the occupants of the other wing of the castle, as she neither visited them herself, nor allowed little Carlos to go to the old lady as usual.

Her restlessness, however, rendered it impossible to play the invalid long, and she soon again gave parties or paid visits in the neighborhood. Although this was not agreeable to Elmar, as it made the family quarrel public, he nevertheless rejoiced that Katharina had not yet commenced the threatened law-suit.

Elmar's inquiries resulted in the discovery that the figure the two friends had seen was probably Wehlen. The head groom, who, since the accident, had cherished a special hatred towards him, reported that Wehlen had obtained admission to the castle and the princess's apartments through a little door in the old citadel. Immediately after this discovery, Willich set to work to put in order the old rusty bolt, which, when pushed forward, rendered it impossible to open the door, and had completed his task that very day. Wehlen, when he found it impossible to enter by the way he had hitherto used, had doubtless come in through the main door, and, not suspecting so simple an obstacle as a drawn bolt, gone out in the same manner.

The head groom, at the same time, expressed his serious anxiety about the influence Wehlen had obtained over the princess. She would no longer do the simplest thing without his advice, or rather, permission, for he did not seem to rule her entirely by flattery, but, strangely as it might sound, quite as much by fear. In spite of his frequent visits to the castle, notes constantly passed to and fro be-

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tween the princess and her chamberlain. The maid, who had recently read one of these missives, was amazed at the tone Herr von Wehlen ventured to adopt towards her mistress. She had been the more surprised, because she, as well as the other servants, was firmly convinced that Wehlen was trying to obtain the princess's hand, and this was rather a singular mode of courtship.

The latter hint caused Elmar little anxiety. Wehlen was too well acquainted with the affairs of the family to strive for such a doubtful happiness as a marriage with Katharina. Besides, Elmar thought that such a chain would seem unendurable to the restless adventurer, especially as he would have too much to fear from the vengeance of the family to be able to carelessly shake it off again whenever he chose. On the contrary, it seemed more in keeping with Wehlen's character to reap as much personal advantage from the situation as possible, and when Katharina's fortune had been squandered, or at least greatly diminished, instantly continue his wanderings.

The lever of mingled flattery and fear which he used to gain his object, betrayed the craft of the adventurer. With Katharina's blind vanity, the power of the former was readily discovered, but it required a deeper insight into her character to detect that, in spite of all her recklessness and violence, she had a great respect for a will that resolutely opposed her own. Whether it was because, at such moments, she perceived that she could not defend her own caprices by any reasonable arguments, or from a certain instinctive dread that unconsciously slumbered in her heart, and which makes even wild beasts fear the eye of man, the mirror of his intellectual superiority, suffice it to say that Elmar had sometimes had occasion to notice this trait in her character.

A proper use of this discovery would doubtless have been very advantageous to him, in his conduct towards his sister, but it was repugnant to his nature to play such a tyrannical part, and, moreover, the thought that Katharina had lost a large fortune by his father's second marriage and his own birth, involuntarily induced him to treat her with special indulgence. He could, however, easily imagine that Wehlen, who knew no consideration, would soon make himself her absolute master unless some lucky accident enabled her to escape her jailor.

The idea involuntarily occurred to him, as he remembered the last conversation

with his sister, which afforded him undeniable proofs of her increasing unreasonableness. Could Wehlen, from his point of view, be particularly blamed if he made himself master of a will which had forever lost the power of controlling itself, and seemed destined to be a slave? Was not Elmar himself greatly in fault for having left this irrational will without a guide, and thus made it the prey of an adventurer?

The thoughts to which Elmar yielded were very unpleasant, very painful. A perhaps undue sensitiveness made him shrink from a step which might possibly afford him some personal advantage, and he secretly put forward the pretext of his want of legal right to excuse his hesitation. Would not some one of the numerous persons with whom his sister was in constant intercourse have made the same discovery and spoken of it to him if Katharina's want of rationality were really so great as it sometimes appeared to him? With the exception of Aunt Vally, no one had even hinted at such a thing. Relatives and intimate friends had often been offended and spoken angrily about her, it is true, but even the baroness, when he cautiously questioned her, only replied with a shrug of the shoulders, "Katharina was always full of whims."

So he let the matter rest for the present, and waited with still greater anxiety for the news which was to remove the second obstacle. Unfortunately, however, the intelligence was not what he expected, for a letter from the ambassador informed him that all the church records in the capital had been examined, so the marriage must have taken place somewhere else.

Elmar was very much depressed by this news, and determined to instantly go to the city himself to make personal inquiries. He was just going up-stairs to the baroness to discuss the matter, when a letter from the princess was handed to him.

Katharina stated that she had now allowed him sufficient time to procure the marriage certificate, and no longer had any pretext for delaying the performance of her duty. On reflecting upon the circumstances, she hoped that Elmar would voluntarily renounce his pretended rights, in which case she would be disposed to provide for his future in a manner suitable to the change in his position. Otherwise she must of course appeal to the law, and Elmar could then blame himself if she showed no farther consideration for him.

He crushed the letter indignantly in his hand, and hurled it into a corner of the

room. It was not so much the purport that enraged him, for he had expected it, but the style of the whole epistle, which plainly showed that Wehlen, not his sister, was the real writer. To see himself threatened by this man with the loss of his property, his whole social existence, at once angered and humiliated him.

At last he controlled himself, and as this letter destroyed the hope of keeping Erica in ignorance of the cloud that had darkened the horizon of her life, he resolved to inform her of the matter at once, and tell the whole truth, as she would at least hear it from his lips in the most considerate way.

"How would you bear the loss of Altenborn, Erica? How would you reconcile yourself to your fate?" said Elmar, as he finished his tale.

"How would I reconcile myself to my fate, Elmar?" asked Erica, half laughing. "Am I a fairy princess, who has been rocked in a golden cradle, and did you first see me clad in silk and velvet, or in a somewhat faded calico frock? To one who has spent a happy childhood in circumstances so narrow as mine, poverty is no terrible spectre. On the contrary, I can paint the future in charming hues. We will live in the dear old house at Waldbad,—that certainly belongs to you, Katharina cannot rob you of it; grandmamma will come with us, occupy mamma's room, take possession of her armchair, and sit in the sheltered place on the veranda where my mother always went in pleasant weather. Elmar and I will go to walk, or I will row on the sea, and on particularly bright days induce grandmamma to trust herself to my boat; but then Sandor must stay at home, he is an unruly passenger, and might upset it."

"So grandmamma and Sandor are placed on a parallel," said the old lady in a jesting tone. "It will undoubtedly be an enchanting life, Erica, but who will provide our food, or are we to be satisfied with air, sunlight, and walks?"

"Oh, old Christel will cook, and I'll begin to take lessons from the cook here to-morrow morning."

"I think your idyl will be far better performed if we leave Altenborn every summer, and spend a few months in Waldbad with grandmamma and Sandor," replied Elmar. "So let us hope that my journey may accomplish the desired result; and to lose no time, I will apply for my passport this very day."

"Then you must be going to some foreign country, Elmar?"

"Yes, to Stockholm; my parents were married there."

"So your mother was a Swede?"

"No; a German. Unfortunate circumstances compelled my grandparents to emigrate to Sweden, where they lived in comparative poverty, until their oldest daughter became a successful and famous actress, and was able to support them by her exertions."

"Then your mother was an actress?" Erica almost screamed.

"Yes; do you think it so very strange?" asked Elmar, somewhat displeased.

"Very strange. Wonderful, Elmar!" exclaimed Erica, with sparkling eyes; "if your mother's name was Agatha, and your father's Roderick."

"Certainly. But how did you know it?"

Erica sprang from her seat, threw her arms around Elmar's neck, and whispered amid tears of joy, "My idyl will, as you wished, be acted only at Altenborn, Elmar; for I know that your parents were married in Malmö by the pastor Dahlström."

Elmar gazed at her in speechless astonishment, and before he had collected his thoughts sufficiently to reply, Erica continued,—

"You don't believe me, Elmar? I will bring you proofs of my assertion."

She hurried out of the room, and soon returned with an old portfolio, originally very handsome, but now shabby and soiled, which she eagerly opened before Elmar and the old lady, who had approached in the greatest agitation.

"Here are your father's own letters, Elmar; read them, and then let us thank God for the wonderful goodness that placed them in my hands."

A solemn silence fell upon the spacious apartment. The baroness and Elmar reverently read the letters which the dead man had written to his betrothed, his bride, and his wife, while Erica was mute in sympathy with their emotion. When the grandmother and grandson had finished reading the letters, she told them how she had found the portfolio among the rubbish cast on the shore by the storm. She hesitated a moment whether to communicate the unfriendly contents of the envelope containing the letters, as the "*hoch und wohlgeboren* nephew," to whom it was addressed, could be no other than Elmar himself. But she thought she ought to tell the whole truth, and therefore faithfully mentioned that also.

"I am sincerely sorry for my good un-

cle's anger," said Elmar thoughtfully; "the more so as he has gone to the other world; yet I feel innocent of blame, for I had no idea that one of my mother's brothers was still living."

"The fault rests in a certain degree upon me," said the old lady, "and yet I hope I do not deserve any severe punishment. My son did everything for his wife's family that he promised in these letters, but unfortunately all, except the youngest brother, died very young. The latter had determined to become a merchant, and, against Roderick's wishes, remained in Sweden. He too became dangerously ill, and at his wife's urgent entreaties, Roderick accompanied her to Sweden to see the sick, perhaps dying, man once more. Contrary to our expectations, the brother recovered, while his sister soon lay upon her death-bed. After her decease, Roderick gave his brother-in-law the portfolio, which belonged to Agatha, without suspecting the existence of the letters, which were probably in some secret-drawer, or he would undoubtedly have taken them out.

"When he reached Altenborn with the dead body of his wife, he was so overwhelmed by grief that he could not even give me the particulars of her illness. He too soon followed her to the grave, and I confess that I felt deeply wounded and indignant at the want of sympathy on the part of his brother-in-law — who owed his whole fortune to the dead man, and was, though innocently, the cause of all this misery. Perhaps it was a certain timidity which kept him from approaching an aristocratic family, but to me it seemed like the greatest heartlessness and ingratitude.

"Moreover, every recollection of him recalled the memory of my own loss, and it is certainly pardonable if I did not seek to awaken this grief. As he made no effort to see his nephew, I saw no reason to try to keep up the intercourse, especially as I heard he had gradually become a rich man. Elmar, who when his parents died was a mere child, had therefore no suspicion of the existence of this uncle.

"I now hear with surprise, that the latter felt so deeply offended by the want of attention on his nephew's part. He may have attributed it to a pride, which was ashamed to own a merchant as a relative, and here again the trait of character natural to us all asserts itself. We always remember our rights far more distinctly than our duties, and it is easy to see that most conflicts arise from this source."

"But was the old gentleman really drowned at the time of the shipwreck?" asked Erica.

"Yes, for I read his name among the list of passengers lost on a steamer which was wrecked on its way from Stockholm to St. Petersburg. Why he took these letters with him, or whether he perhaps intended to settle there, will now never be known."

"What a strange dispensation of Providence that the waves should cast the portfolio on the shore of Waldbad, and I should be the person to find it! I felt very much disappointed about this yarn and button correspondence," continued Erica, holding up one of the letters, "and mamma teased me about my baffled hope of having saved the letters of a young prince — and now I have really saved those of *my* prince!"

"And with them your prince's inheritance, Erica; for without these letters how could I have known that my parents were married in Malmö, so I should have sought the certificate in vain. But as your mother belongs to a Rhenish family, I wonder she did not discover the writer."

"I think she had a tolerably correct suspicion, Elmar, but she probably did not think the letters important enough to induce her to renew connections she had completely broken off. Afterwards she became so ill that she doubtless forgot the matter, but I was so much interested in the contents of the portfolio that I took it with me. A short time ago I read the letters, though without the slightest suspicion that I was in the very place to which the last one was addressed. Everything agrees exactly. The terraces which were to be illuminated, the island from which the fireworks were to be reflected in the magical little lake, and you are the little bawler, Elmar, who was to be kissed."

"And who makes the same pretensions now, Erica!" said Elmar, clasping her in his arms with a radiant smile.

XLV.

THE GLASS OF SUGAR AND WATER.

ELMAR instantly informed his sister of the discovery of their father's letters. He desired to have a personal interview with her, but the servant in the anteroom refused to admit him, saying that her Highness positively declined to receive any visits, so he was compelled to content himself with a letter, and carried his caution so far as to omit mentioning the place where the marriage certificate was to be found, but requested a short delay, to

enable him to procure the missing document.

As Elmar was convinced that Wehlen had some of his own servants in his pay — for in what other way was his entrance through the main door of the castle to be explained? — he even took the precaution not to place his letter to the magistrate of Malmö in the mail-bag at the castle, but delivered it to the postman himself, and received a speedy and most satisfactory reply, for it contained an attested copy of the certificate.

Katharina had not answered his letter, but he knew that she had hitherto delayed the steps she had threatened. The favorable turn in Elmar's affairs seemed to have made her ill, for she saw no one, and remained quietly in her own apartments.

As Elmar would not again expose himself to the chance of being refused admission by the servant, he made no attempt to see his sister, but once more communicated with her by letter. After informing her that he was in possession of the document she required, he said that he was ready to show her all brotherly affection, but should expect the same treatment from her. If, therefore, she wished to remain at Castle Altenborn, she must change her conduct, and cease all intercourse with the adventurer, who, though he had left the castle, still remained in the neighborhood.

This adventurer was with his mistress, when the letter was handed to Katharina by her confidential servant. Wehlen, without any apology, took it from her, and read it attentively from beginning to end. A heavy frown darkened his brow, and he said in a tone of angry reproach,—

"So all my trouble has been in vain. You might have known it, must have known it, your Highness. It is most unwarrantable to have sent me on such a wild-goose chase."

Katharina's roving eyes rested upon him with a half indignant, half timid expression, as she replied, "It was your own proposal, I objected."

"Ah! the old convenient excuse, with which superiors are so fond of throwing the blame on the shoulders of their subordinates. But if the affair turns out successfully, it never originates with the latter, then all the credit belongs to their employers. But if humble-pie must be eaten with arrogant masters, I can assure you it is far more difficult with haughty mistresses," he added with his disagreeable laugh.

A pleased smile involuntarily hovered around Katharina's lips, and she said

apologetically, "It may be that it was my own wish, you probably know, for I have forgotten it. But" — and her voice rose to a loud, almost shrill tone — "what I have not forgotten, will not forget, is my hatred for that beggar wench, whom, in my generosity, I took out of the streets, and who has rewarded all my benefits by shamefully robbing me of my rights."

"Very good, excellent, your Highness! But what is the use of this hatred, what will it accomplish?" Katharina, who had been reclining in her chair, sprang to her feet, and approached Wehlen. "I want you to drive the girl out of the house," she passionately exclaimed; "I order you to think of something that will ruin her in Elmar's opinion."

Wehlen contemptuously shrugged his shoulders, and made no reply.

"Do you refuse?" cried Katharina. "Am I surrounded by traitors, will you too desert me? Did you not voluntarily offer your assistance, and have I ever declined to comply with your demands, unwarrantably large as they have been? Do you suppose I am no longer rich enough to be able to pay you for your services. What do you ask? Speak! I will give any sum, only rid me of this girl!"

While the princess poured forth these words with passionate gesticulations, Wehlen stood before her with folded arms, and eyes fixed quietly upon the floor. He seemed to be reflecting, and when she paused, said coldly, in a tone that formed a striking contrast to her agitation, —

"I believe, princess, you have often had occasion to observe that this violent style of conversation is not to my taste, and does not make the slightest impression upon me. You will not induce me to gratify your wish in this way."

"But my request is so reasonable, so natural. I only want you to make Elmar detest Erica."

"That is, you only want me to get you the man in the moon," cried Wehlen, laughing. "Shall we accuse her of stealing, or charge her with a secret affection for the head groom?"

"Both, both!" exclaimed Katharina; "he can no longer love her, if —"

"If he believes it, of course; but of course he won't believe it." Wehlen paused, fixed his eyes on the floor, and then asked slowly,—

"Would the young girl's removal really be such an advantage to you, your Highness? Would not another marriage soon threaten you?"

"Only get rid of Erica, and all, all will be

well. I know Elmar, he will never love again."

"I certainly put very little faith in your knowledge," replied Wehlen with a scornful laugh. "But no matter. I am your servant, and if you give me sufficient means, will endeavor to gratify your wish."

"Ask what you please. Take everything, only prevent this marriage!"

"Very well. We have just heard of a farce performed to bring two people together, we will now play one for the opposite purpose. As here are fortunately no laws against imitating a drama, I think of borrowing a little from 'Romeo and Juliet' and also 'The Natural Daughter.'"

Katharina threw herself back into her chair, and murmured sulkily, "I don't understand you, and am not inclined to joke."

"Yet your Highness must listen to this joke, if you wish to gain your end."

"Then speak!" replied Katharina peevishly, leaning back into the chair again.

The Princess Bagadoff must herself undertake the introduction to the intended farce. Drawing the mask of cordial affection closely over her face, her Highness will instantly hasten to the hostile camp, kiss her grandmother's hand, warmly congratulate her brother, and lovingly embrace his betrothed bride."

"I? Have you lost your senses, Wehlen?" cried Katharina furiously. "I will never embrace her!"

"Just as you choose. Then think of another plan."

"I cannot, that is your business."

"Then you must do what I ask, and my farce will not succeed without the embrace. Some other time I will give you the programme of sisterly affection more in detail, for the present it is only necessary that the war should be ended and eternal peace proclaimed. You will then have an opportunity to meet Erica freely, and can mix in her food or drink a powder, which ——"

"Poison? No; the cook can do that, I will not."

Wehlen stared at the speaker, her features betrayed no unusual excitement, and her eyes as usual wandered restlessly around the room. He waited till they rested on him, then made a formal bow, and said coldly,—

"If your Highness wishes to take such radical means of unfastening the gordian knot, I am sorry that I am unable to assist you."

She looked at him in surprise. "Did not you speak of it yourself? You said I was to mix poison in her drink."

"I spoke of a powder, which if taken in too large doses may produce death, but when given in smaller quantities, only causes a deathlike slumber."

"Well, what then?"

"This apparent death will bring the living Erica into the ancestral vault of Altenborn, where I, like a second Romeo, will release her from her coffin, and, more fortunate than he, restore the girl to life. Of course this life must henceforth be passed in some very remote quarter of the globe, but as steamboats and railroads can do wonders, a return might be apprehended, even from there, if we did not, on restoring her freedom, give her a husband. With a sufficient dowry, this will be an easy matter, and ——"

"It will be very difficult," interrupted Katharina, "for I remember Heseler wrote a short time ago that he could send me no more money, and my strong box is empty. How much will you need?"

"If I include the expenses of the journey, and all the rest, perhaps thirty or forty thousand thalers, a bagatelle to the wealthy, aristocratic Princess Bagadoff."

"Write to Heseler yourself, he is obstinate."

"My letter would probably have less effect than one from your Highness. However, any jeweller would give twice the sum for your jewelry, so we can pawn it until Heseler becomes more reasonable."

"If only the court were not to be at Coblenz just now! They say the king and queen are coming to Stolzenfels early this year."

"There go the happy pair!" cried Wehlen, suddenly approaching the window. Katharina also started up and looked out. Elmar and Erica were walking up and down the terrace arm in arm, apparently engaged in eager, animated conversation, while Sandor sneaked after them, as if depressed by the utter neglect to which he was condemned.

"How I hate her, how bitterly I hate her!" muttered Katharina between her clenched teeth. "I'll give you all my jewels this very day!" she suddenly exclaimed; "pawn them, and then get the creature out of my sight."

She rang the bell violently and ordered the maid to bring her jewel-case at once. The secret drawer opened at the pressure of a spring, and the glittering gems which composed various ornaments flashed before Wehlen's greedy eyes.

"Take all these pearls and diamonds!" she eagerly exclaimed; "the necklace alone is said to be worth almost the sum you

need. Now make haste, that I may not witness this sight a second time."

"I will most faithfully execute your commission, your Highness, and in order to lose no time, I'll give you the powder now."

"The powder?" said Katharina, shrinking back. "How can you give me the powder now?" she added suspiciously, "when we have just planned the affair."

"I have already told you it was only a strong narcotic," replied Wehlen quietly. "I use it in very small doses to shorten my own wakeful nights, so I always carry it about with me."

He drew a paper out of his pocket, and handing it to Katharina, said slowly, "Half of this quantity will produce the desired effect of apparent death; a larger dose would really kill any one, and I must therefore urgently entreat you to be cautious."

Katharina tapped the floor impatiently with her foot. "Why do you give me more than I need?" she murmured; "divide it."

"Why, your Highness," said Wehlen carelessly, "because some might happen to get spilled; and besides, it is better to be prepared for all emergencies."

"Very well, give it to me. I will be careful."

"And I will bring you the money as soon as possible," said Wehlen, taking the casket.

"No, leave it! I remember—I can't do without the diamonds. Prince Lowenberg's ball takes place day after to-morrow, and I have accepted the invitation. We must think of something else, for I must keep the diamonds."

Wehlen bit his lips and muttered a half-suppressed oath, then made a low bow and said, in a measured tone,—

"Then I will take my leave for to-day, your Highness, and hope, on returning to-morrow, to hear that you have made a far better plan than mine."

"Nonsense! You know I don't trouble myself about such matters, I have other things to think of. I won't allow you to go until we have settled upon something."

"In that case, it can only be what I have already proposed; and this time beauty must replace the sparkling stones, or your Highness remain at home."

"What an absurd idea! It would instantly cause all sorts of gossiping stories. I know a plan. You said yourself that my jewels were worth twice the sum. I will keep a set of pearls, and give you the rest."

"That will scarcely do, for value and the market price are very different things, and I doubt now whether all the gems will bring the necessary sum."

"I won't give up the pearls!" persisted the princess obstinately; "I don't see why my wishes are not to have some weight."

Her companion made no reply, but turned towards the window as if his attention was wholly absorbed by the beautiful landscape. He was reflecting that he could not conquer this obstinacy at present, and considering whether to avail himself of the smaller advantage which presented itself, or wait for a more favorable opportunity. At last he formed his resolution, and, turning to Katharina, said craftily,—

"The reproach you have just uttered, your Highness, wounds me the more deeply because I believe it to be so entirely undeserved. It has always been my endeavor to be guided entirely by your will, and I have put forth all my powers to enable you to gratify it. Firmly as I am convinced that we shall not be able to obtain our object without the set of pearls, I will therefore make every effort to accomplish your wishes. Early to-morrow morning I will go to your jeweller with the diamonds, to see what can be done, and therefore beg you to give me a written order to enable me to pawn the stones."

"I knew it!" cried Katharina, laughing. "Women only need to understand how to manage men; when you find energetic opposition, you always yield. But your idea about the jeweller seems very unpractical; people always manage such things with very different persons, usurers and similar wretches."

"I am surprised at your Highness's knowledge of business," replied Wehlen, making another low bow to conceal the smile that hovered around his lips; "I will of course follow your excellent advice, little as I know about those people. Give me the order, and I will do my best to obtain the money. But until then I must beg you not to use the powder, but employ the time in concluding terms of peace with your relations."

"That is my affair; I know what I have to do," said Katharina loftily. "Here is the order, and now be as quick as possible."

Wehlen took the note and the casket, and after again urging the necessity of caution, left the room. Katharina looked after him with a contemptuous glance.

"He was obliged to go without the pearls," she murmured in a tone of great

satisfaction; "he is furious because he could not get his own way, but my will was stronger, I conquered." She had uttered the last sentence aloud, and now rose and continued her muttered soliloquy. "And I have the powder too, and can use it whenever I choose. If the innocent heather-blossom has to remain a little longer in the crypt than is agreeable to her, she can take it as a just punishment for her shameful treatment of me."

Katharina's eyes began to glow with the strange light that sometimes startled Elmar, as she continued, in broken sentences, "Ah! I can so well imagine her terror, when she wakes among the coffins; when she gradually regains her senses, and realizes that she is buried alive! Ah, how she will shudder, how she will shriek in frantic terror, and there will be no one to hear, no one to help her! And then, at midnight, all the coffin-lids will open, the dead will rise, and the crumbling, mouldering bones will join together and crowd around. 'What do you want among the dead? How dare you enter our sacred ranks? You shall atone for your crime. Atone! atone!' Those are the words they will shriek, and the bones will rattle, and the hollow sockets of the eyes stare furiously at the intruder, and the skeleton hands shake threateningly, and the terrible army move nearer and nearer.

"What! To me?" Katharina suddenly shrieks in mortal terror. "To me? Is this the tomb of my ancestors? Am I buried alive? Will the dead threaten me? They come nearer, nearer. Help! Help! They surround me, help! They clutch at me; their skeleton hands are thrust towards me with threatening gestures. They will drag me away with them. Help! Save me from the dead. Help! Help!"

The piercing shrieks at last brought the footman into the room, and it was evidently not the first time that he had found his mistress in such a condition of apparently causeless excitement, for he showed no special surprise, but rang the bell to summon the maid, and turning to the princess said soothingly, —

"There are neither dead nor living people here to harm you, your Highness, and I would advise you to take a soothing-powder."

"Powder!" cried Katharina suddenly, with an entire change of manner. "How dare you propose that I should take a powder? Even my patience will not tolerate such liberties, Markort."

"Then your Highness can take some drops," replied the man with great calm-

ness, and as the maid now entered, he left his mistress to her care, and withdrew to the ante-room.

"Well, I should like to know what is brewing again," he said to himself, as he sat down in his comfortable chair. "That Herr Wehlen must have excited her terribly, and I noticed when he went out that he carried something heavy under his cloak, though, contrary to all etiquette, he wore the cloak into the princess's room, probably with the intention of concealing the object, whatever it was, from me. If her Highness could have seen his expression as he came out, she would probably have felt a little afraid of him. Besides, he whispered mysteriously that I must keep an eye on my mistress and warn her to be extremely cautious; she must take no steps until he returned; I was to repeat that to her every day. But as he knows just as well as I, that that would be the very way to make her take the step more quickly, I think he probably wants her to take the chestnuts out of the fire, and keep out of mischief himself. I really wish I had not discovered the bolt on the little door, or it had been nailed up; then he would have been forced to stay in the trap and eat the stew he has made with the rest of us. As it is, he will probably be in some safe place long before the storm breaks here. I'm only curious to see what is really going to happen, but I suppose I shall learn soon enough."

With this philosophical consolation, Markort soothed himself, and his thoughts soon turned to other subjects, while the maid exerted all her skill to calm her excited mistress, and at last succeeded in doing so; but as Katharina was afraid to be alone, and old Fräulein Arensfeld was ill, she was obliged, to her great annoyance, to spend the whole evening with the princess.

The following morning Katharina's agitation seemed to have entirely disappeared; she was in unusually gay spirits, and declared her intention of paying her grandmother a visit. The maid, in silent astonishment, wrapped a cloak around her, and the princess left the room. When she entered the baroness's apartment, Elmar and Erica, who had been seated side by side, talking together, started up in surprise, and Elmar hastily came forward to meet his sister.

"Well, Elmar," said Katharina, laughing, "you look as if it were a very wonderful thing for me to come here; yet it is very natural I should wish to offer my congratulations and embrace my—my new

sister-in-law. Who would have supposed, when you were joking about the ugly little girl in Waldbad, that she would so soon be your betrothed bride? What do you say, Erica? Your hopes hardly dared to soar so high in those days?"

"No; my thoughts were very far from an engagement," replied Erica, with great self-control.

"What did you say to this astonishing event, grandmamma?" said Katharina, turning to the old lady.

"I heartily rejoiced over what I had long anticipated, for as Elmar made me the confidante of his love immediately after his return from Waldbad, the news could not possibly surprise me."

Katharina tried to fix her restless eyes on Elmar. "So you systematically deceived me, my good brother!" she vehemently exclaimed; "this is the more unwarrantable —"

"I thought you had come to offer your congratulations, Katharina," interrupted her grandmother gravely.

"So I have, I just said so! Besides, I have come to flatter my new sister-in-law, that she may look upon me with favor and permit me to remain in her castle."

"You wound me deeply," said Erica with an expression of great pain.

"If that is your intention, you must adopt a different tone, Katharina," Elmar replied. "Uttered in this way, your words sound like an insult, which I suppose was scarcely your object."

"I said what I meant," replied Katharina impatiently; "why do people always make difficulties and misunderstand me? You are master of Altenborn now, Elmar, and therefore I must of course humbly bend my head, that I may not lose your favor. Why are the water-pitcher and sugar-bowl here?" she asked, suddenly changing the subject, and eyeing the objects mentioned with great interest.

"Erica has a headache, and wanted some sugar and water," answered the baroness.

"Ah! sugar and water?" said Katharina quickly. "Yes, a glass of sugar and water is excellent for headache — it gives one such a sound, deep sleep, though dreams are sure to come — I had some frightful ones yesterday," she added with a shudder.

The little party gazed anxiously at the speaker, but she again changed the subject, and turning to the baroness, said hastily, —

"Grandmamma, will you show me the pattern you told me about some time ago? I should like to embroider a rug for Elmar."

"I don't exactly know where it is, child, I will look for it presently."

"Ah! pray find it now, grandmamma, I want to see whether it will suit my purpose."

"Your wishes are somewhat troublesome, my dear Katharina," replied the old lady, half angrily, "however, as I have not seen you for so long a time, I will try to gratify you."

When the baroness had left the room, Katharina hastily approached Elmar, who was standing by the window. "Do you know, Elmar," she whispered hurriedly, "Wehlen says you never received the marriage certificate, it was only a blind, and I ought not to allow myself to be frightened by it."

Elmar shrugged his shoulders. "It is in my writing-desk; if you will come down with me, you can see it."

"Yes, let us go," said Katharina eagerly. She moved quickly towards the door, then paused, turned, and said: "My tooth has ached all night along. I dare not expose myself to the cold air in the corridor again. I should have liked to see the paper, but as you have never gratified any wish of mine, of course I shall not venture to ask you to bring it here."

"I will say, like grandmamma, that your wishes are somewhat troublesome, Katharina. However, as you want to make peace, though in a somewhat singular manner, I will grant your request."

A strange feeling of terror seized upon Erica when she thus saw herself about to be left alone with Katharina. She longed to ask Elmar not to go, but felt ashamed of her cowardice, as he would not be absent more than a few minutes. Besides, Katharina now seemed less excited, and Erica could scarcely help laughing at the triumphant air the princess assumed on finding her wishes gratified.

"Why haven't you taken your sugar and water, Erica?" she asked, approaching her. "I will make it for you myself. I know exactly how to do it, for I always mixed Bagadoff's, who often suffered from headaches."

Erica involuntarily shuddered. The allusion to the prince reminded her of the locket he had once worn around his neck, and which she had in a certain sense inherited from him. Meantime, Katharina, turning her back on the young girl, busied herself with the pitcher and glasses. The latter could not help smiling at the importance Katharina placed upon so simple a matter, as well as the slow, methodical manner in which she performed her task.

At last the mixture was ready, and turning towards Erica with the glass, she handed it to her. The latter was in the act of taking it, when Katharina drew back so suddenly that the glass almost fell, and though Erica caught it in time to save it, a part of the contents was spilled over her dress.

"That will do no harm," said Katharina with a loud laugh, "it was meant to be shaken."

Erica, startled by the strange words and wild laugh, looked anxiously at the princess, and noticed the singular light that sometimes sparkled in her eyes.

"You are ill, princess," she cried, starting up, "let us go to grandmamma."

Katharina pressed her violently back into the chair. "Stay here, and drink your sugar and water!" she almost screamed, "I am going to grandmamma alone," and she fairly ran out of the room, slamming the door behind her.

Erica was bewildered by the scene, and as Elmar now entered, hurried towards him, and threw herself into his arms in such agitation that he anxiously asked the cause.

"I am afraid Katharina is losing her reason," she whispered, trembling; "I saw the demon of madness lurking in her eyes. Don't leave me alone with her again, Elmar. I am afraid of her."

"Has she insulted you?" asked Elmar hastily.

"On the contrary, she was very kind, but acted like an insane person."

"Unfortunately I am aware that she has long been entitled to that name; let us consult together about the best means of dealing with this misfortune. But first of all calm yourself, and drink the glass of sugar and water, that stands here on the table."

Erica turned, but before she reached it, the door of the room was thrown open and little Carlos rushed up to her.

"I can come and see you again, Erica!" he exclaimed joyously. "Markort told me so when I got back from my ride just now. Mamma said I might go to grandmamma's rooms as much as I liked. Now I shall come every day, Erica, and you'll visit us again."

"Certainly, Carlos," replied Erica kindly; "and what sort of a ride did you have to-day, was the pony good?"

"He used to be rather obstinate," replied the boy importantly, "but he's learning to know me now."

"And how often have you been thrown, Carlos?" asked Erica mischievously.

"Only once, and that was because the head groom pulled the bridle too hard."

"You are a real hero, Carlos. Come, shall I offer you this orange to refresh you after your ride, or don't you like it?"

"Peel it for me, Erica, and put on plenty of sugar."

"And out of gratitude you drink Erica's sugar and water," said Elmar half angrily, for he had no very great affection for the boy.

"Erica won't scold," he answered, pouting. "Look! I haven't left you a single drop," he added, laughing, as he turned to the young girl.

"You little robber! Then Uncle Elmar must make me a new glass while I peel your orange."

Elmar finished his task more quickly than Katharina, and Erica eagerly emptied the glass. Carlos seemed to find equal pleasure in consuming his orange, but soon grew more quiet, and at last said he felt tired.

"You lazy boy!" exclaimed Elmar reprovingly, "you ought to be ashamed to be tired after that short ride."

Erica, on the contrary, who saw real weariness in the boy's face and movements, interceded for him, took him in her arms, carried him to the sofa, and covered him with her shawl.

"Kiss me, Erica, then I will go to sleep," murmured the little fellow, and when Erica had obeyed his wish, his lids drooped heavily, and she moved gently away from his couch.

She had just returned to Elmar's side, when the baroness and Katharina at last came out of the adjoining room. The latter's eyes instantly rested upon the empty glasses, and a look of triumph flitted over her face.

"How did you like my sugar and water, Erica?" she asked sneeringly.

Erica, with well-meant hypocrisy, was about to answer "Very much," but Elmar replied, "You must ask Carlos that question, Katharina, he drank the whole glass."

Katharina's eyes opened so wide that it seemed as if they would start from their socket, and her lips also parted as if she wished to speak, but had no power to form the words. Her whole figure looked as if she were stricken with a sudden paralysis, and Elmar went up to her and asked anxiously,—

"Are you ill, Katharina?"

"Carlos!" she gasped at last, with a violent effort, "Carlos, where—where is he?"

"Asleep on the sofa there, you need have no anxiety about him," replied Elmar soothingly.

Katharina rushed towards the little sleeper, convulsively tore away the shawl that was spread over him, and gazed fixedly at the child. He seemed to be sound asleep, for the movement did not rouse him.

"Carlos!" shrieked Katharina, "Carlos! Wake! Hear me!"

Elmar hastened towards his sister to prevent her from frightening the child, but she thrust him violently away, and bending over the boy, screamed in the same piercing tones,—

"Carlos! You must not, you shall not sleep! My sweet darling, my angel boy, my Carlos! What will you do in that horrible vault? The dead shall not dare approach you. They must not stretch their skeleton hands towards my boy."

The rest of the party gazed in terror at Katharina's frantic gestures. There could no longer be a doubt in regard to her condition, and the baroness whispered,—

"She alarmed me so much while we were alone in my room, that I secretly sent to Altenborn for a doctor, and I think he must arrive immediately. Try to get her away from the poor little boy, Elmar, she may do him some serious injury."

Elmar instantly went up to his sister, who was hanging over the child, now uttering piercing shrieks, and then low moans. She did not thrust him away again, and he saw with the greatest surprise that the child did not stir, but in spite of all his mother's outcries, continued to sleep soundly and quietly.

"Go back, I will attend to Carlos myself," said Elmar, but Katharina pressed jealously forward. "No!" she screamed, "I alone will watch my darling in his sleep. No one shall touch him. Neither the dead nor the living, only I!" She drew herself up as if to defy all contradiction, then, with a shrill shriek, suddenly sank senseless on the floor.

The baroness and Erica rushed towards the fainting woman, while Elmar pulled violently at the bell. With the aid of the servants, the princess was carried into the baroness's sleeping-room and laid on the bed. During all this noise the child continued to lie perfectly motionless; it was warm, and its limbs were pliant, but it could not be roused, so they let it remain asleep and once more covered it with the shawl.

The expected physician soon arrived,

and on being informed of what had happened, shrugged his shoulders, saying,—

"Madness constantly creeps nearer and nearer. It has sometimes been terrible to me to see the progress it was making. In the case of a different, more yielding character, I might have interfered, perhaps saved her, but a person of the princess's peculiarities could not be helped. But what is the matter with the child? Let me attend to the boy first."

When he reached the little sleeper's couch, he involuntarily drew back and cast a startled glance at Elmar, who was standing beside him. "The child is not asleep," he said gently, "he is dead."

"Dead?" repeated Elmar in horror. "Dead? How is that possible? A few hours ago he was bright and well."

The doctor felt the boy's pulse and heart, then shrugged his shoulders and repeated his statement. He again requested an exact account of the events that had just occurred, and asked to see the glass from which the boy had drunk.

"It is one of these two," said Erica, pointing to the goblets with a trembling hand.

The physician carefully examined both, and then carried one to the window. "I think I can detect the presence of pulverized opium in the grounds of this one. We will instantly subject them to chemical tests, to make sure of the fact. The boy has drunk the poison the mad mother intended for this young lady, and the dose was probably so strong for the child, that death resulted almost instantly."

Deep silence fell upon the room, every one seemed paralyzed by the words; then Elmar with a passionate gesture threw his arms around Erica and strained her to his heart.

"Let us offer fervent thanks to God for your merciful preservation!" he exclaimed in the most violent agitation; "I can scarcely endure the terrible thought that I was so near losing you. We will bear our heavy misfortune with resignation, and although I now reproach myself for not having interposed sooner, and thus perhaps prevented this terrible catastrophe, I am absolved by the testimony of the physician, who confessed his own inability to help Katharina."

"Certainly, Baron von Altenborn," replied the latter. "The princess, in my opinion, was only to be guided, or rather controlled, by actual force, and so long as her insanity could not be proved, no one had a right to use violence. There can be no question of neglected duty in this case."

But now let us go to the unfortunate woman, and see how far it is possible to help her."

XLVI.

THE SISTER OF CHARITY.

THE period which followed the horrible events related in the last chapter, was a very sorrowful one to all the inmates of the castle. The princess was attacked by fever, and the physician declared her life to be in danger. The wildest ravings flowed in a constant stream from her lips, and it was impossible to decide whether they were inspired by delirium or madness; but the magic circle in which these ideas seemed bound at last, spite of the confusion in which they were inextricably mingled in her mind, gradually afforded the watchers a clue to the truth.

Her wild fancies invariably led her to the crypt, where she awoke only to see herself surrounded and threatened by the mouldering forms of the ancestors who had been buried before her. In less feverish moments a deliverer came in the shape of Wehlen, who opened the vault and restored her to life, but carried her across the sea to some distant region.

At other times the invalid's fancy was entirely occupied by her diamonds; she revelled in the sight of the glittering gems, and would not give them up, but the next instant laughed triumphantly because she had saved the pearls, and promised to be very careful of the powder. She gave Wehlen authority to pawn her ornaments to provide for the expenses of the long journey, and advised him not to go to her jeweller, but a pawn-broker.

The constant return of these fancies at last revealed the true state of affairs. The princess's servants, who were closely questioned, confirmed the suspicion by their statements, and all uttered a sigh of relief, when it thus appeared that Katharina had not intended to commit a murder, but only obtain the removal of Erica, by casting her into a sleep which should bear the semblance of death. As the sediment left in the glass really proved to be opium, and this could never have produced apparent death, it was evident that Wehlen had deceived the princess and sought in this way to wreak his revenge upon Erica and Elmar.

The doctor now remembered that he had himself procured the opium for Wehlen, as the latter pretended that he could not control his nerves without it. In this way he had managed, without attracting

attention, to procure a sufficient quantity of the poison to gain his object.

Inquiries were instantly made at the inn where he formerly lodged, but he had left it on the very day he received the casket of jewels from Katharina. He had spoken of an immediate return, it is true, but as he had taken his by no means inconsiderable luggage with him, the innkeeper doubted it.

Elmar instantly applied to a magistrate, who issued a warrant for the apprehension of the criminal; but as the latter had obtained several days' start of the officers, he could not be found. Traces of him were discovered, but they only proved that he had reached the sea, and was already beyond pursuit. He had disposed of the larger portion of the gems in Cologne, and taken the sum obtained for them, as well as the rest of the jewels with him, as — without any knowledge of the catastrophe which had happened at Altenborn — he pursued his way to Brussels and Antwerp.

In spite of the self-sacrificing devotion with which the baroness and Erica watched over Katharina, they could not, even with the assistance of the maids, dispense with the aid of an experienced nurse, especially as Katharina's condition kept all who surrounded her in a state of constant excitement. They therefore entreated the help of one of those excellent nurses, the Protestant sisters of charity, who have chosen their arduous vocation from the impulses of their own hearts, from true Christian love and sympathy for the sufferings of their fellow-mortals.

When the sister, clad in her plain dark dress, approached the bed, and bent over Katharina in loving anxiety, all felt as if the danger were no longer so great, and recovery might be possible.

"You will have a difficult task," said the baroness, "for it is often scarcely possible to control the patient, and moreover we understand very little about it, and you can only employ us as assistants, while the principal burden will rest upon your shoulders."

"That is the purpose for which I have come," replied the sister gently, as she stood up and looked at the old lady with an expression of tender sympathy.

"Fräulein Molly!" cried Erica; "grand-mamma, it is Fräulein Molly!"

"Sister Molly, Erica," said the latter, holding out her hand to her. "You see the guiding hand of Providence which leads me to a woman towards whom my heart was once full of rage and bitterness,

in order to give me an opportunity to atone for my sin."

"Then you are doubly welcome to me, sister," said the baroness. "I was very anxious about your fate, and both Elmar and I have made every effort to obtain news of you. You must tell us how you were guided into this path."

"As we are all guided into it," replied Molly with a smile. "Misfortune must first soften the hard soil of our hearts, to prepare it for the good seed, and awaken a yearning for true salvation. If we then take refuge in the safe haven of Christianity, the desire to do some active work there is natural, and for those who are bound by no ties, the care of the sick is at once the most attractive and beneficial. But we must not forget our patient, who is beginning to grow restless."

Molly made the necessary arrangements with so much calmness and care, that all felt grateful to the firm, steady hand, that undertook the direction of affairs. Katharina's condition, in the opinion of the doctors who were summoned, had become perfectly hopeless, and as the balance of her mind was irretrievably lost, her recovery could scarcely be desired.

Little Carlos's body had not yet been placed in the family vault. Erica and even the baroness clung to the belief that the death might be, as Wehlen had declared, only a seeming one, so for the present the little corpse remained in the castle.

Molly was deeply moved as she stood beside the dead child, who had once caused her so much trouble and anger, and for whose life she would now cheerfully have given her own.

The body was kept until the signs of approaching dissolution dispelled every doubt, and the baroness herself gave orders for the funeral. It was a sad day; Elmar felt the loss of the child all the more keenly, as he was forced to acknowledge that he had not given him the full measure of love the poor little fellow, who was entirely innocent of his mother's acts, had a right to claim. This mother alone remained unmoved, and while the child was being lowered into the vault, laughed gaily as she talked of the pearls she had won by her energy.

Katharina's powerful constitution resisted the disease much longer than the physicians had expected, and but for Molly's wise arrangement, which skilfully divided the burden, all would have been exhausted and worn out by their attendance on the invalid.

"I cannot understand, sister, how you

can continue this fatiguing work almost without interruption," said Erica one day, when she sat alone with Molly beside the sick-bed. "I am probably as strong as you, but I sometimes feel so tired, that my sleep resembles the apparent death into which Wehlen wanted to throw me. Ah! forgive me, Molly," she added hastily; "I mentioned a name which must have a painful effect upon you."

The sister of charity smiled kindly at the speaker, and answered cordially, "Don't be troubled, Erica, the time when the utterance of that name wounded me has long since passed. If the void in my heart, the dreariness of my life, induced me to bestow my love upon an adventurer, my heart, by God's blessing, is now so full that it has scarcely room for the memory of an affection so unworthily lavished. In those days I longed for kindness, for a love that seemed everywhere refused, and recklessly grasped at the bait held out to me; now I have plenty of kindness and affection, both within and without, and can forgive Wehlen, nay, even bless him for having given me the shock which guided me into this happy path."

"I admire you, Molly, but I do not think I could follow your example; I should be unable to lead a life of such entire self-abnegation."

The sister of charity smiled again. "You speak so, because you do not know this life, Erica; because you have no idea of the deep, blessed satisfaction it bestows. The love I once missed so painfully, I now receive in rich abundance from my patients. When I see their eyes sparkle with joy at my entrance, it affords me a delight the fond glance of your lover can scarcely give. When I see tears of gratitude in their eyes, and feel how indispensable I am to them, how my devotion alleviates their sufferings, perhaps cures them, I could shout aloud in my joy that God has so favored me, given me such unspeakable happiness here on earth."

"I bless the stern school through which I have been led, for in it I have learned that we bear our happiness within us, and are always miserable when we seek it outside. While, in former days, when I tried to find this happiness in external things, my heart was always filled with rage and bitterness towards those who were apparently more fortunate than I, I now live in harmony with the whole world, and sincerely rejoice in the prosperity of all my fellow-mortals, for their good fortune no longer seems stolen from me. The spring from which I have learned to draw this

happiness gushes forth in boundless abundance, and can refresh all who seek it; so do not pity me any longer, but join in thanking God for the mercy he has shown me."

Molly's words were confirmed by the expression of her face. Her features were so transformed by the new look they wore, that she could now really be called pretty. She performed her toilsome duties with a cheerfulness which exerted a refreshing and inspiring influence upon all who surrounded her, and made her the object of universal love and reverence.

"I feel so base and wicked beside Molly," said Erica, as she sat with Elmar in one of her intervals of rest. "Although I do everything in my power for Katharina, it is only my duty, and yet it sometimes seems hard, and but for the hope of being with you now and then, I could scarcely bear it."

"I hope your strength will not be overtaxed, Erica," replied Elmar, casting an anxious glance at her weary face. "Although I am sincerely glad that Molly finds so much happiness in her profession, it is not suited to all. You, my little heather-blossom, have a much nearer duty, that of making the happiness of one individual, and I think the occupation will afford you sufficient satisfaction."

"You know it gives me too much joy, Elmar, and almost makes me indifferent to the rest of the world. But it is the very fact that Molly feels so happy without this blessing, that raises her so high in my eyes, and perhaps it is very wrong in me, but I torment myself with extremely traitorous thoughts about her. I have been fancying what an admirable wife she would make for Reinhardt. He likes her very much, for he talked in the most enthusiastic way about her, and she would be such an excellent pastor's wife."

"Perhaps better than he is pastor, in spite of his really admirable sermons. I intend to propose that he should take a position in some university, and would be glad to help *Professor* Reinhardt in his career. He is too much interested in learned subjects for a country pastor, whose mind must be principally engrossed by the affairs of his parish; and besides, on the other hand, it would be a pity for him to make no use of his fine talents. As a professor who delivers lectures, he will be exactly in his element, and we will see that he obtains such a position as soon as possible."

"Well, Molly would make an excellent professor's wife."

"Let us beware of playing Providence,

my darling," replied Elmar gravely, "and leave the matter entirely to God. Molly is contented and happy, let us not disturb her joy. All the cares and troubles which the professor's wife might encounter would weigh heavily on our hearts, and we might reproach ourselves for having torn her from her peaceful asylum."

Katharina breathed her last sigh without recovering her consciousness. Much as the old baroness had longed to receive one farewell look or word from her granddaughter, she could not help acknowledging that it was better so, since the remembrance of what had happened must have exerted too terrible, too prostrating an effect upon the sick woman. The deathbed, however, thereby lost the lofty sanctity which usually surrounds it, and which the survivors treasure in the inmost shrine of their hearts as the dearest and most sacred recollection left them by the dead.

The family vault once more opened to receive a corpse, and the mother slumbered beside the son. The dead woman had no cause to fear the dreams that had tortured her when living; she slept peacefully beside those who had gone before, and the general awakening will not bring conflict and menace, but fervent love, deep peace.

After the funeral Molly left the castle. How different was the departure from the one she had taken from this place scarcely two years before! She thought of it with a certain mournful pleasure, and repeated to Erica what she had so often said during their conversations.

"We must seek happiness and joy within, not without; the external world is only a mirror, which reflects our own faces. Now that I have these two heavenly blessings in my heart, I feel them everywhere, even outside of me, and the same world against which I formerly battled, because it oppressed me, now acts in harmonious unison, and overwhelms me with a wealth of goodness and beauty."

The misfortune which had marched with its iron tread through the halls of Altenborn, cast its shadow over the nuptials of Erica and Elmar, it is true, but could not obscure their happiness. By degrees its memory faded more and more, and the horizon of both was radiant with the brightest sunlight.

The magnificent rooms, in which Erica had danced at her first ball, were refurnished to receive their new mistress, who at first found her home almost oppressively splendid, and would have preferred to remain with Elmar in the baroness's wing,

but soon became accustomed to the spacious, lofty rooms. She possessed in her own character the firmness, which makes poverty and wealth appear like mere garments, and as poverty had not depressed her, so wealth excited no feeling which could arouse a fear that her head would be turned.

Although, under the new rule, the magnificent rooms were not continually filled with guests, they opened willingly and often for gay parties. The beautiful Sidonie, whose presence Katharina had so often vainly desired, frequently adorned these entertainments, and, to the delight of all, the exquisite statue now showed that it was animated by a soul. Although her reserved, distant manner had become too much a part of her nature to be entirely laid aside, it was only assumed towards the world in general, while her intimate acquaintances were treated with all the more cordiality. Werner, on the contrary, seemed entirely unchanged by his happiness, and as his character—as Fritz had already remarked—suited Count Meerbburg better than the secretary Werner, all united in praising him.

The sky at Dorneck was also illuminated by the brightest sunlight, and though the family circle had grown smaller, the villa never lacked visitors or gayety. The wives of the two lieutenants still considered their parents' house their home, and usually spent the summer afternoons there, and the beautiful Rosa also felt at home, and nestled more and more closely into the hearts of her husband's mother and father. Prince Eduard and Edith were the only persons not quite satisfied, for as the young prince could not possibly remain in Bonn any longer "on account of his studies," and the countess still refused her consent to a speedy marriage, the young lovers were obliged to content themselves with a constant interchange of letters.

The idyllic life at Waldbad was really enjoyed, though the baroness declared she could not endure the long journey, and begged Erica to content herself with Sandor. The return to her old home moved Erica deeply, but the tears that flowed from her eyes were those of gratitude, and when she knelt with her husband beside her mother's grave her heart overflowed with thankfulness to God.

Old Christine was overjoyed to see Erica again, and proud of the fulfilment of her prophecy. The latter made no attempt to take the faithful old servant to Altenborn, for she felt that she could not make her as happy there as she was in Waldbad. Erica

and her husband often visited the place which had been made sacred to her by the events of her childhood, and her life with her mother. True, the little ruinous house soon disappeared to make way for a handsome villa, but the sea and landscape remained unchanged, and the beautiful view from the veranda gave her the old home-like feeling.

Thus her devotion to her old residence still existed, while the new home took deeper and deeper root in her heart. While she called her summer excursion to Waldbad going to the other house, she termed her stay at Altenborn remaining at home. Going to Waldbad and remaining at Altenborn seemed equally delightful, for in both places Elmar was at her side, and wherever he was she felt really at home.

From The Edinburgh Review.
"FATHER ARNDT."

ERNST MORITZ ARNDT, in his well-known song "What is the German's Fatherland," may be said not only to have asked of History a question, but to have dictated to her its answer, which now, after more than half a century, she echoes through the countless throats of the triumphant German race. For, though Arndt was never a minister or a statesman; though history gives, as it should give (as Arndt himself gave in all generous sincerity), the glory of the great liberation to Von Stein and the other mighty leaders of that glorious time, still it was Arndt, and Arndt alone, to whom the true instinct of the race has given the proudest of all titles for a patriotic man. Others might be called guardians, defenders, saviours of their country, but his title was higher than these, since to every German heart the name of "Father Arndt" for many a year was as familiar as it was honoured and welcomed.

In ordinary circumstances it might be called a misnomer, for the man who was known at his death as "der Deutscher Deutsche," was Swedish born. His birth occurred at Schoritz, in the Island of Rügen,* on the 26th of December, 1769, in the same year with "the Corsican," Napoleon I., whose might he helped at last to overthrow. He gives us, in his "Recollections," a charming picture of his boyhood's home, of his relatives and intimates, his growth and adventures. He recalls what all men can feel, while so few can describe — the touching influences of the early home, looked back upon, after a lapse of sixty or seventy years, with more pleasure and distinctness than things within his closer gaze. In the genial simplicity which was part of his nature, he interests his readers in the strict, manly, honest father, who brought his boys up to "rough it" in life, and the gentle, praying, pious mother, whose sweet influence never faded from the soul of her famous son.

* It may be well to remind our readers that the Island of Rugen, with that part of Pomerania including Greifswald and Stralsund, though Prussian since 1815, was Swedish territory from 1720 till that date.

With so much unconscious skill does he lead us into that simple country life, that we pass with a certain feeling of regret to the part of his history where the young home life ends and the struggles of the world begin. With him they began early, and were, in some sense, self-imposed, Filled with an unusual instinct of manliness, and in some sort, as we shall see, fore-conscious of the part he should have to play, he exercised himself whilst still a child in every sort of hardship and discipline, physical as well as moral. Many of his verses refer to this period of his life with a very striking and simple truthfulness. Having, like many another clever boy, read very much more than his friends supposed, we find that even the perusal of Rousseau's works, so far from corrupting, actually fortified his mind against many temptations to evil, and strengthened him in his determination to become, with the aid of his self-imposed discipline, a man in the truest sense of the word. Sent to Stralsund to the upper school at seventeen, we find him, while zealous in his work and hearty in his play, yet persistently taking hours from his sleep to weary and harden his frame with long solitary walks of many miles at a time. An extract from his "Recollections" will not be here out of place:—

"Every spot of wood and copse and seashore within a dozen miles of Stralsund was often pressed by my wandering feet; the hours I spent thus and in the company of friends were taken from the night. Thank God! I never needed very much sleep; perhaps I should have wanted more but for my principle of keeping under my body, and bringing it into subjection by hard discipline and constant weariness. And so the years 1787, 1788, and 1789 saw me constantly pursuing this lonely course, and quoting to myself continually the words of Horace, which many a time since have proved to me a true motto: 'Hoc tibi proderit olim.'"

In his twentieth year, this young Christian philosopher — for so he might be called, though his faith lay in what is now-a-days called the muscular form of Christianity — finding his strength to resist temptation too small, took a great step consistent with the principles he had laid down for his life-guidance. He was brave

enough to run away from Stralsund altogether, and, with only a few shillings in his pocket, to wander beyond Demmin, seeking for employment as a clerk or farm-bailiff. An old officer to whom he applied took him in, treated him kindly, and promised to employ him, provided he obtained his father's consent; a kindly way of bringing the lad again into communication with his friends. In due time a reply came from his father, wisely leaving him a free choice as to his future course, but at the same time pointing out that if he wished to be a farmer he could have no better opportunities for the purpose than by remaining at home. So he returned to his father's house at Löbnitz, where he remained nearly two years, pursuing his studies and his bodily discipline with undiminished energy; he says of this time:—

"These nobler pursuits, however, (intellectual study), did not prevent my continuing my system of toil and endurance. I would sleep constantly on bare boards like a guard bed, or on faggots; sometimes in the open air, under a haystack or a tree, wrapped up only in a cloak; or I would stretch off on long walks many miles in all directions, often starting after the rest of the household were in bed; and all to keep my frame hardy and under subjection. It greatly surprised and troubled my parents, whom I often saw shaking their heads over my oddities, but as they saw that in other points I behaved rationally, and did what I had to do like a man in his senses, they wisely let me go my own gait."

When twenty-two years of age, he went to the University of Greifswald to study divinity, and then spent a year in that of Jena for the same purpose; and while a *candidat*, or, as we should say, while waiting for a title to orders, was invited by Kosegarten, the pastor of Altenkirchen, to undertake the post of tutor in his family. As is customary in Germany, a *candidat*, if licensed, is permitted to preach before ordination, as Arndt frequently did, and as it appears with great success. And yet it was during his stay here that he came to the decision of not seeking ordination. He admits his reason to have been the unsettled state of his religious convictions, disturbed, like those of many others, by

the events and ideas of the period (1796). That he was a conscientious and practical Christian then, even though not feeling fitted for a clerical life, is unquestionable, as is the fact that in after-years he was a truly pious, faithful believer, as we may gather from his many hymns, and his famous "Catechism for the German Army and Landwehr," to which we shall have occasion to refer further on as one of the most influential and most characteristic of his many writings.

Thus he arrived at twenty-eight years of age, a man with all his energies active, of more than average reading, and of exceptional talent in various directions, but without any settled course of life—the sort of man over whom, in ordinary circumstances, even the wisest and most experienced are apt to hold up their hands and shake their heads, and say, "Alas. poor fellow, he has wasted his life." Arndt, even here, followed the usual course of such tardy, often too tardy, choosers of a career. He resolved to travel. His father, before the ruinous wars of Napoleon had devastated Germany and beggared its people, was a man very well to do in a worldly sense, deriving his income from the profits of a very extensive and prosperous farm; and he seems to have acted throughout with true wisdom and kindness towards his son. He supplied him with the necessary means for his support during his travels. But we must not suppose Arndt to have merely undertaken this course for idleness sake. He was one of those men who are conscious that they ripen late, because they are less ready to call themselves ripe than others. But the sort of unsettled instinct which for so many years had accustomed him to wander, sent him, as it were, "on the grand tour" as a sort of finish to the preparation of his life-work. As his "Recollections" tell us, his walking habit, begun as a corporeal discipline, was continued as the best means possible for the study of mankind, which became with him a sort of zoological passion.

So he travelled for the best part of two years (1798 and 1799), spending three months in Vienna, traversing Hungary and crossing the Alps into Italy. When

in Tuscany the fresh outbreak of war changed his plans, and compelled him to leave Rome and Sicily unvisited. As the war advanced he betook himself to Nice, thence to Marseilles and Paris, where he spent the whole summer of 1799, making his way slowly home in the autumn by Brussels, Cologne, Frankfort, and Berlin. We mention these particulars of his journey, as showing how his sojourn among these various nationalities gradually, without his own consciousness, was fitting him for the part he was to play in the history of his country. His pedestrian mode of travel was that best fitted, in conjunction with his own peculiar geniality of temper and address, to supply him with a thorough knowledge of the various peoples whom he visited, and to remove many prejudices which, in those days of difficult communication, might have warped his judgment and restricted his usefulness.

He next settled as a Privat-Docent or tutor, at his first university — Greifswald. This is the position generally first taken by a German scholar who is ambitious of becoming a professor. To this course Arndt was led by the motive so strong in most men at some time or other. He had fallen in love while studying at Greifswald, and, as the young lady was the daughter of a professor there, he found his establishment easy. He married, was soon made a deputy-professor, and finally, in 1805, professor-extraordinary, with a salary of five hundred thalers. Yet, as if to show that at that period of his life and of the history of his country Arndt was to be unembarrassed by family ties, his young wife died in childbed within a year of her marriage.

To this period of his life we may assign his first political activity, and we shall abridge from his own words the account he gives of his political views and their history, describing, as he felt them to do, the kindred growth of sentiment and opinion in millions of his fellow-men:—

"Although," he says, "the outbreak of the French Revolution of 1789 be regarded, and, to a great extent, justly, as the great transition period of German feeling, still even in my boyhood, many strange and one-sided notions had

taken root in my mind, which even now, when my hair is white, will not altogether yield their place to more far-sighted views. As a little news-reader between nine and twelve years old, I had my political prejudices and prepossessions. From my earliest remembrance I was a sturdy, perhaps an extravagant, royalist, probably unconsciously made so by my daily surroundings. My father was no politician, but my two uncles, on the other hand, the one in his views a thorough Swede and a worshipper of Gustav Adolf, the other a Prussian to the back-bone and an upholder of the fame of Frederic the Great, each taught me to regard a king, such as they exalted, as infinitely superior to any republic. As might be supposed, holding such strong opinions in favour of monarchy, I always took the side of England against her revolted American colonies, when that subject gave occasion to debate.

"And with regard to the French? While still a child, and at the time when my parents' means had been insufficient to afford me such educational opportunities as I afterwards enjoyed, I had spent much of my time in reading such old chronicles and histories as came in my way. Such works, for instance, as those of Puffendorf and others, descriptive of the Thirty Years' War, of the ambitious intrigues and the atrocious deeds of Louis XIV. And these had filled me with dislike, almost with detestation, of the people whom he ruled. And so it was that I rejoiced at every French reverse I heard of, and was quite a little Englishman in my hatred of the race.

"Then in my young manhood came the Great Revolution, and its course gave rise to many discussions at home. Nor could I deny the truth of many of the accusations made against the government of Louis XVI., or dispute the justice of many of the principles laid down at the time by the revolutionary leaders, however desecrated and perverted those principles may have been in the course of after events. But still I mourned over every reverse experienced by the Germans and their allies, without being bound in any way to regard myself as one of them; living, as I did, a Swedish subject by the Baltic, far from the scene of conflict, and at heart far less a German than a Swede. Then came my years of travel, and I saw the French nation for myself; I learned to admire its amiability and gaiety, but also to measure its falsehood and deceit. I had lingered on my homeward journey at Aachen, Köln, Koblenz, and Mainz, and seen everywhere the remains of Germany's ancient glory trampled and dese-

erated by the insulting conqueror. I experienced a certain vexation and impatience, but nothing yet like wrath. At Frankfort and Höchst I found myself in the midst of battle; yet all this was but a spectacle for me, though I should have rejoiced had an angel of God, as in the days of Sennacherib, left the Frenchmen's camp filled with dead men in a night. But my patriotic wrath had still to waken, and it did not tarry long. It came at last; that wrath which, however little joy-foreboding, was destined to support me through many a weary day, and give me gladness in the hardest of them all.

"Napoleon's return from Egypt took place within a few days of my departure from Paris. I had watched that great ambitious figure of the time in his rise and progress; I had followed all his intrigues, his victories, his proclamations, his conquests; I know not whether I had rightly understood him, but after the battle of Marengo I learned to shudder before that figure then so idolized by so many and so mighty men; and that shuddering was but an unconscious premonition of the ten years' woe which was to come. But my utter wrath—a wrath that at the thought of the degradation of Germany and Europe often became a very frenzy—this was awakened by the peace of Luneville, and the disgraceful stipulations, the underhand bargainings by means of which Talleyrand and Maret stripped and portioned out the divisions and the destinies of the Fatherland. The events of 1805 and 1806 tore away the last supports on which anything truly German could any longer lean; the worst was come; the least and the greatest, the unknown and the famous, all that made Germany, lay in one common mass of desolation, and the Gallic cock crowed his victorious note over the ruins of her desecrated glory. The day was come for all individual feelings, all opinions, all prejudices, all passions, all preferences, to sink together in one common crash. It was when Prussia and Austria, both after unavailing struggles, lay prostrate in the dust, it was then that my heart began to love them, and to love Germany, with a real love, and to hate the French with a true and holy hate. It was not Napoleon only—not the crafty, calculating, taunting Corsican, born in the land where the very honey is a poison, not the man whom liars afterwards were ready to make the great scapegoat for all the just wrath of Europe,—it was not him I hated most; it was the French themselves—the deceitful, proud, ambitious French, the crafty, treacherous enemies of Germany through centuries gone by; it was these I hated in the very fulness of wrath, as in that very fulness of wrath I recognized my Fatherland, and loved it in a passion of love. All that was merely Swedish died out from me; the very hero-names of Sweden became for me but the echoes of the bygone time; and just when, through its divisions, Germany had no longer an existence, my heart embraced the notion of its oneness and its unity."

Be it said, in passing, that from that

time till his deathbed, the same feeling was predominant in the patriot's mind. He held to it through many disappointments, through many trials, but with an intensity of faith which was almost, if not altogether, an inspiration. It was the ruling notion of his life, the assurance of his old age, the prophecy of his departure; the thing he was permitted to live beyond ninety years to foster, and which another decade has so nearly and so marvellously brought to pass. Thus it was that Arndt became the apostle of German nationality; but, if his mission was glorious for its patriotism, it was not the less an apostolate of hatred. No doubt the provocation he had endured was excessive and intolerable. The French exercised the powers—we will not call them rights—of conquest over Germany with an unsparing hand; and no curse was ever laid on Europe more bitter than the savage and selfish tyranny of the armies and the men born of the French Revolution of 1793. Europe and Prussia had their revenge in 1814 and 1815, and it was a just one. But we were not prepared, after half a century of peace and fireside intercourse, for a fresh outbreak of those vindictive passions, stamped with all their original intensity; and we can regard with no friendly or indulgent eye those who have kept alive these sentiments in the hearts of a people, and have dug up the war-hatchet, after an interval of fifty or sixty years, with the ferocity of a savage tribe. France entered with most culpable levity into the war which has just devastated so many of her fairest provinces, under the impression that she was seeking a passage of arms, of no very dreadful import or long duration. She instantly encountered a nation armed at every point, animated by the deadliest hostility, and bent on her total destruction. Whatever may be the political view taken of the war, it is impossible to deny that the existence of intense national hatreds is a dreadful calamity, and the cause of all other calamities, for it acts and reacts incessantly. The greatest indication of progress that we can trace in our own country is that we appear to have outgrown these feelings. The English entertain at this time no national hostilities at all, and hardly condescend to notice the hostilities occasionally expressed against themselves. Our national songs are songs of loyalty and of independence, but not of hatred. But it is not so in Germany or in France. There all the sentimental and imaginative powers of the nation have been wrought upon by their poets, by

their statesmen, by their leaders, until a contest between these nations appears to each of them to be a contest against the Powers of Evil, and no sacrifices are too great to procure the defeat and humiliation of their foe. To the propagation of this irrational and sanguinary passion Arndt and his imitators have not a little contributed. They have responded but too faithfully to the sanguinary chorus of the "Marseillaise."

But we must return from this digression, which has been wrung from us by the present lamentable dissensions of Europe, to the career of Arndt himself, which now assumed a more serious character.

His first political work appeared somewhere about 1803, after his name had become extensively known by the several volumes in which he had just published the notes of his journeyings in various lands. The special point of politics on which he entered concerned what was then to him in some sort a home-question. His work was entitled "History of Serfdom in Pomerania and Rügen," and, exposing, as it did, the cruel tyranny exercised in too many cases, up to the very time of his writing, by the nobles against their dependents, drew down upon him the enmity of the ruling class, the displeasure of the King (of Sweden), and a threat of criminal prosecution. His account is entertaining:—

"The book was shown to the King, his informant having marked with a red pencil many passages in which I was supposed to have been too free in censuring acts of some of his distant ancestors upon the throne. The King, in the first storm of his displeasure, sent the book, so marked, to General von Essen, the chancellor of my university (to whom I had dedicated my work), requiring him to call the audacious author to account and, if needful, to proceed judicially against him. General von Essen summoned me to Stralsund, gave me a hint of who my accusers were, and asked me how I meant to extricate myself from the difficulty I was placed in, as the King seemed seriously displeased. I took the book and underlined with my pencil a number of passages showing beyond all question the great cruelty and injustice still prevailing, and begged the general to point out these passages to the King. He did so, and the King replied: "In that case the man is right enough;" and so I returned to Greifswald none the worse."

Arndt modestly adds in a "perhaps," what is an unquestionable fact, that his book contributed towards the abolition of serfdom a few years afterwards by the same king of Sweden — Gustave Adolf IV.

The year 1804 he spent for the most part in Sweden, still zealously continuing his studies of nationality, and publishing his experiences there as he had done those gathered in his other travels. Some smaller works, mainly political in their purpose, date from the same period. But it was the news of the disasters of Ulm and Austerlitz which evoked the first part of the passionate work, "The Spirit of the Age," by which he at once asserted the power of his vigorous patriotism over the German mind. It was not as a *savant*, as an original thinker, as a profound statesman, that he came before his fellow-men. To have appealed in such a character would have been to address a limited audience indeed, and what he had to say was meant for all. It was as an honest, simple, unpretending citizen, as a believing Christian man, as one who deplored the corruptions and felt the miseries and scorned the despairing fatalism of the time, that he spoke to the nation, and struck the chord of faith and hope and patriotism which has never ceased since then to tremble in the German soul, and which now, after a lapse of threescore years, seems at last to be swelling mightily to its grandest and fullest vibration. Like all the mightiest things he wrote, whether in prose or verse, his book, as he says himself, was "forged upon the glowing anvil of the hour;" out of the abundance of a generous heart, stirred by the terrible necessity of the time, his mouth was forced to speak. Indeed almost literally *to speak*, for his book is far more an oration than a composition; and none who ever knew the man, in reading such a work, could fail to fancy, as sentence follows sentence and page follows page, that they could hear the utterance flowing from his lips. But the book was no mere rhapsody, though even that might have been permitted, might even have been profitable, at the time. Starting from a common-sense view of the intellectual condition of the period, he portrays the spirit of the age as it then was, and proves the truth of his portraiture by the writings as well as by the actions of his contemporaries.

He contrasts the past state of nations as history displays them with their state as he had learned to judge them by his personal experience, and, gradually passing in review the moral weakness and the political profligacy of Germany, breaks out at length into a cry of bitter lamentation over the terrors and the miseries of the time; accusing and ad-

monishing those on whom he shows the blame to rest. From page to page, as the work proceeds, the accusations become more definite and pungent, the admonitions more impressive and striking. At one time he scourges, with incisive plainness of speech, the princes who, coqueting and intriguing with the foreigner, could in such unprincely fashion betray their dignity, their duty, and their people; at another it is the nobles in whose teeth he flings the shame of such unchivalrous forgetfulness as could let them wear the cross of the Legion of Honour, accepted at the Gallic despot's hands, as a reward for their shedding of their fellow-Germans' blood. Again, with a sort of awe which can scarce help shuddering before the mighty force of the man's nature, he depicts "the Corsican upstart" himself. In him he recognizes, so to speak, the very incarnation of the "spirit of the time;" and then, turning again to consider the age itself which produced such a man as Napoleon, his utterances, like his feelings, oscillate violently between the anguish of despair and the awakening of hope. "Now," he exclaims, "we are suffering for our sins of ten years ago, and of five years ago; the chariot-wheels of desolation are rolling further and further, and how and where shall they be stayed?" "Never," he replies, "till some equally tremendous power be found to oppose it." Never, in fact, till all the German race could feel as he himself could. For Arndt's last utterance is like his first in this. He proclaims the faith of believing hope as opposed to the promptings of a fatalistic resignation. He calls upon *each living individual man* to rouse from the mechanical condition to which "the spirit of the age" had degraded him, to his proper sense of freedom, virtue, and patriotism. "If," he says, "each of you can feel your own heart honest, your country worthy, your laws holy, your Fatherland imperishable, and your princes noble—then have no fear, for so the world is saved. For every hundred such as you are worth a host of other men."

It was not, however, as a mere rhetorician that Arndt took his part so heartily with the race of his adoption. When his "Spirit of the Age" appeared he was lying dangerously ill at Stralsund, shot through the body in a duel with a Swedish officer whom he had called to account for language reflecting upon the people of Germany. Nor was this all he suffered in the cause. Just in proportion as his influence was great, so was his peril when the

catastrophe of Jena in the year 1806 gave France the upper hand in Germany. Obliged to fly across the seas, he found an asylum at Stockholm, where, while occupied in one of the Government offices, he still laboured constantly for the cause he had made his own. At intervals during the next two years he published the various portions of the second part of his "Geist der Zeit." But the thundercloud of the year 1809 spread over Sweden too, and in its fury swept away the very throne itself.

Though left unmolested, Arndt felt the very soil burn under his feet; and, as may be imagined, the struggles of the year 1809 on the Danube, in the Tyrol, aye, even the gallant Schill's fatal enterprise, and his death at Stralsund, made it impossible for Arndt to remain where he was. In spite of the peril he incurred, he made his way homewards in disguise, through many difficulties and obstructions, travelling chiefly by night from place to place, here and there when necessary disarming suspicion by simple audacity, and coming at last, under a feigned name and character, to his brother's house, from whence the ferment of the time brought him to Berlin.

"I arrived just before Christmas, on the day of the public entry of the King and Queen. I saw the procession and the rejoicings (such as they were); all hearts then were united in one common German spirit through those misfortunes, in the blame of which each man felt conscious of having a part to bear. Berlin, once so proud and glorious, lay in dust and ashes. . . . I went out from my place of concealment and mingled in the crowd, who with shouting and weeping filled the Linden and the Schloss-platz. I speak of those who wept among others who rejoiced, for more eyes were wet with sorrow than were bright with joy. When the lovely Queen presented herself before the people in the balcony of the palace, we could see in her tearreddened eyes how deep an anguish mingled with the gladness of her welcome. I looked for Scharnhorst,* and saw him ride slowly past with the other generals, pale and preoccupied, and bending sadly forward in his saddle."

Though he gives few details of his life in Berlin, beyond mentioning that, despite the multitude of spies, both French and German, busily occupied there, he contrived to associate with a circle of men like-minded with himself, and to practise assiduously, as they did, in rifle and pistol galleries, in the hope of one day turning

* See in the Poems the two pieces "Der Waffenschmied der Deutschen Freiheit," p. 249, and "Scharnhorst der Ehrenbote," p. 252.

the skill they thus acquired to the profit of their country, he unquestionably did much towards awakening and spreading the spirit of resistance to that power of Napoleon which only too many Germans were disposed to regard as irresistible. In the Easter of the following year, 1810 (its former Pomeranian territory having been restored to Sweden), Arndt returned to his professorial chair at the University of Greifswald, General von Essen, the Governor, receiving him as if he had spent in England the whole time from his leaving Stockholm.

But it was not with the purpose of remaining there permanently that he resumed his professorship. The man's heart was too deeply engaged in the salvation of his country to allow selfish ease or secure position to tempt him from what he had undertaken as an irresistible duty. Of course, though he does not say so, he was a conspirator. He held too firmly the hopes which he so ardently instilled into others not to be ready to stake his all on any reasonable effort to deliver Germany from its slavery. He recognized too fully what he preached so clearly, that the only prospect of general salvation lay in individual self-sacrifice, to place himself in any situation which might silence his voice or hamper his hand when the great time should come. He went back to his post, as he tells us in touching words, —

"With neither the desire nor the hope of retaining it long. Who could at that time calculate on anything remaining a year or two secure or unchanged? But two objects were essential to me; first, *make myself a position in an honourable and irreproachable civil capacity*, and secondly, to settle my family affairs. Both of these objects I had secured by the summer of the following year (1811), and then sent in my resignation, packed up my books, papers, and possessions, and betook myself to my old home at Trantow to await events; ready to fly, if I must fly, or to journey, if my country wanted me." (*Erinnerungen*, p. 114.)

We have called these touching words, for the sentence we have underlined implies more than it says; it implies that this true self-sacrificing patriot felt himself more or less at a disadvantage from the very conditions of life which had prepared him to be most useful to his country; that, in fact, at times he felt for himself, and possibly at times was made by others to feel, that his wandering and apparently unsteady course in life was a wrong and a discredit. It became then a part of his purpose, an essential to qualify him, even in the eyes of his own party, for

useful and important duties, that he should in some sort remake his character, when already he had reached middle life, and resume his professorial duties to remove suspicions which no doubt were readily heaped upon him by those enemies of his country against whom he had been so outspoken, and from whom, day by day, he went in danger of his life.

The views which Germany held in those years of terrible abasement were by no means as high and as unanimous as those it holds now. Had they been so, Arndt would not have been what he was, or have done what he did. His was an utterance, not a mere reverberation. German unity is the one cry heard to-day; but it was one among very many when the modest simple-minded Arndt threw his whole soul into the task of sounding it in the ears of his compatriots, and even among many who had been his friends at Greifswald, his views met little sympathy. Several of the thrones of Germany were filled by French nominees; hundreds of Germans, and amongst them men as distinguished as John Müller the historian, had willingly accepted office under their conquerors; the Confederation of the Rhine recognized Napoleon as its Protector; and multitudes of German troops were serving in or with the French armies. No wonder, then, that Arndt took an early opportunity of setting himself free from all official trammels, as we have seen.

Warned by some loyal friends of the watchfulness of the French spies, and the partial discovery of the German secret societies, he hastened to Berlin, where he procured a passport for Russia (in which country, as he says "there was still a Europe"), providing himself with another passport for the Bohemian baths, to be used in case of need. He was scarcely back a day in Trantow when the alarm came; but we will give in his own words the narrative of his escape from Swedish into Prussian territory:

"A number of us were assembled in a joyous party at the house of the Provost of Loitz, when a mounted messenger brought me a line from my friend Billroth in Greifswald stating that the French had crossed the frontier, and would have the whole country occupied within a day or two. We all separated at once. I drove that very night to Stralsund, which as yet the French had not reached, obtained some money, slept the next night at a friend's house, starting early the following morning by sledge, and, passing on my way several detachments of French cavalry, got by sunset to Greifswald, which I found full of French troops. I bid a

few farewells there, and, avoiding the high roads, made my way across country to a spot where a sledge of my brother's met me, and brought me back to Trantow that night.

"Arrived at the house I slipped in by a back door and reached a side room from whence, in case of alarm, I could easily escape into the thickly-planted shrubberies and so make my flight good to the woods. A number of French troops, both officers and privates, were billeted in the house; but my brother plied them well with liquor, they were weary and exhausted with long marching over ice and snow, and snored away in quiet repose while I spent the whole night in packing and arranging papers, writing letters, and giving my parting commissions, blessings, and good wishes to my friends. For as long as a man lives, though the death-candle be burnt down low enough to scorch his fingers, he always feels he has something to set in order and arrange. The snow creaked under my footsteps, as with the first streak of dawn I withdrew by the back way from the house; my cousin, my sister, and my little ten years old boy clung closely around me, and held me fast. With a last caress and a sad violence I had to thrust them from me and hurry away. I heard my little son's footsteps as he ran after and tried to overtake me, I heard his voice crying loudly behind me; and my whole soul was filled with rage, almost with curses." (*Erinnerungen*, p. 117 seq.)

He made his way in safety to Berlin, to find himself in the midst of that great association of Germans whose one engrossing bond of union consisted of hatred of the French, determination to shake off their yoke, and longing for their destruction. But there, too, he found the place too hot for him, and, furnished with good and influential recommendations, he took his way with Colonel Count Chazot to Breslau, on his way to Russia. From Breslau he passed to Prague, where, strangely enough, he met with information which he had failed to receive weeks before by letter, that the Minister Von Stein, summoned thence to St. Petersburg some time previously, was specially desirous of his services in the great work of liberation he was organizing.

Thus the man at last had found his mission. By what many would call a chance, but he himself honestly believed to be a special Providence, he found himself on the way to his work, his passport ready, and his place appointed. It was for this sort of service he had been making his whole life a preparation. From the early days of his boyhood, in all the modesty and simplicity of his nature, he had still nursed the presentiment of being useful to his Fatherland, when that Fatherland was

found; and the unexpected call to co-operate with one so great as Von Stein found him every way prepared:—

"If any ask from what sources I as a pilgrim and fugitive could be possessed of means and money, I reply: as a boy my heart was filled by God with a presentiment of my destiny; from horror of self-indulgence and luxury I early grew hardy and self-reliant, and learned how to be needy as well as how to abound. And this system I had persisted in even beyond my fortieth year, disciplining myself by voluntary deprivations of food, drink, and sleep. I had well tested my pedestrian powers, and often walked as much as thirty miles at a stretch, while my brothers rode about on handsome horses. From the time of Napoleon's elevation I had felt we should have hard trials to undergo, and I had ordered myself and my mode of life accordingly. From the profits of some of my books, my official salary in Stockholm, and some years' arrears of my Greifswald appointment, which were paid in full in the year 1810, I was provided with sufficient means for my purpose. Now and then indeed, in the company of my friends, I might spend a ducat or a Friedrich's d'or, but when alone or on my wanderings my wants were of the very slightest. I cannot tell how many a time my table was no better provided than that of a huntsman in the woods, or of a hussar on a march." (*Erinnerungen*, p. 125.)

In August 1812, he reached St. Petersburg, and was received into Von Stein's house, where he entered on his functions as a secretary, his salary and appointments being paid by the Russian Government, at whose call Von Stein also was working in "the good cause."

In the following passage Arndt gives his own account of his meeting with Von Stein, and of the work he had to do:—

Towards the end of August 1812, I stood for the first time in the presence of the famous Minister Baron von Stein. I saw before me a man of middle stature, already greyish-haired and slightly stooping, but with the brightest of eyes and a most friendly bearing. Attracted to me as he had been by the perusal of some of my writings, he had invited me to join him in the most cordial manner, and as I stood before him I seemed to feel as if the impression I produced upon him satisfied his friendly expectations. He received me with as pleasant an ease as if we had been already years acquainted, and for my part, notwithstanding the deep respect I felt before a man so famous, I could not help feeling as if we were old friends. . . . Stein pointed out to me as nearly as possible the position I was to occupy with and for and under him, though he never gave me cause to feel myself subordinate. He never spoke of his own position towards the Emperor of Russia, merely saying, "You know what my object here is just as well as what your own has been in coming so

far to the Eastward." And then he gave me the necessary instructions as to the various persons I should have to transact business with. Though never speaking either of his relations with the Emperor of Russia or of his doings, Stein's position in Petersburg was not only that of a representative of German interests in all the events of the time, but also in some sort that of a German dictator. We knew how, abroad, every German with a patriotic soul looked forward to the deliverance of his Fatherland from shame and wretchedness, to the dissolution of the hateful Confederation of the Rhine, and to the demolition of the might of France. And we knew how, even in Russia, there were fighting under Napoleon's standards no less than 150,000 Germans, troops raised by the Confederation, and auxiliaries levied from Prussia and Austria. It was our belief and hope, that if once the star of the mighty Attila of his time grew pale, we might move the hearts of these multitudes, driven as they had been so far from their homes towards the East, by reminding them of the great Fatherland which still lay behind them, and for which they might rather choose to wage a holy battle than to let themselves be herded on to death by a foreign conqueror. Numbers of brave men, inflamed with noble rage and holy hope, had flocked to Russia, under the rallying cry "The German Fatherland," in order to take sword with Alexander against Napoleon, and with all their energies to stir up German youth for the liberation of their country. This was the idea of the German Legion, which was set on foot at St. Petersburg, and the care of this matter was the first business given to my charge. . . .

"What striking changes can be wrought by circumstances in the destinies of man! Who could have thought that I, who in Stockholm during the years 1807 and 1808 had written from the cabinet of Gustavus the Fourth (aye, and from the cabinet of my own heart), so many hard and bitter pamphlets and proclamations against Russia, should now, without changing my opinions or principles a hair's-breadth, be writing in St. Petersburg for Russia, and for the Fatherland we laboured to make ready for the strife? . . .

"And so my posture was that of a German writer (or to use a grander name, a German author), who knew there were many places in Europe where his life was not secure from the rulers of the time. And my time was occupied to the utmost in keeping the press busy with writings, partly dictated by my own feelings, partly commissioned directly by the Government; pamphlets, stirring appeals, calls to arms, despatches, proclamations, contradictions, and exposures of French statements and reports; some couched in Russian language and suiting Russian views, others from the German (may I not say from Stein's?) stand-point. These writings were printed from time to time in German (sometimes even in French), and published in various places at once; some were distributed

to individuals, some sent by post, some even thrown about in the streets and public places, scattered like sparks of fire in the hope that here and there one might kindle in a patriotic heart and help to spread the mighty flame."

Such was Arndt's work, congenial, energetic, and influential, till the great time came; till, indeed, that Victory, which so long had sat upon the helmet of Napoleon, led him to the wilderness of ruined Moscow, and fled away for ever, leaving his lost battalions to stiffen in the unconquerable snow. Arndt himself gives an absolutely appalling description of the dread realities of misery he witnessed, as, following the steps of that helpless retreat, he and the other patriotic spirits who had laboured for their country in exile hastened back to help its approaching restoration. Amidst all the suffering and hardship, which even makes our hearts to ache in reading of after nearly sixty years, can we wonder at the exultation these returning exiles must have felt? Can we help, however we must feel for those whom the disasters of Napoleon overwhelmed so awfully, feeling a sympathy in gladness for those faithful ones to whom such great disasters gave a hope and consolation, restoring them to home and honour in a liberated fatherland? But all was not over with the failure of the Russian campaign. Every day was big with fate, and many a heart that bounded with patriotic hope was destined to be still and cold for ever before the mighty work was done. If Germany had been terrible in its downfall, it was resistless in its uprising, and the first dawn of hope soon brightened to the noon of triumph. Those were times when men's hearts were ready to be stirred, and every means to stir them was at hand. It is to this period we must refer the chief of Arndt's great patriotic songs, which we will pause a little to examine.

A song is but a small thing, but it may be the electric spark which fires the most destructive agents. It excites, it transmits, it kindles those sentiments which inflame the passions of nations; and it may be said with truth hereafter that a couple of songs have contributed more than any practical cause or real political necessity to the conflict which is now afflicting the world. A national song, such as is wanted, appearing when it is wanted, expressing one national idea, whether it be the suffering, the hope, or the courage of a nation, though its metre be rugged, and its words be homely, comes from the heart, speaks to the heart, and stirs the blood of men.

Such were the war-songs of Arndt — plain and simple always — rude and rough enough at times; but songs, notwithstanding, which put before men a mighty purpose in a manly way, making those who heard and sang them feel more than ever the dignity of their manhood, the value of their freedom, and the privilege of their self-sacrifice. They were, as we have said, full of hatred. But there are two senses in which to take the word. Such a feeling was essential to the deliverance of Germany in 1813; such a feeling, taken in conjunction with the other feelings manifest throughout his writings, and in his simple unaffected noble nature, show him to have been a poet according to the grand definition of the greatest poet among ourselves: —

“ Dowered with the hate of hate, the scorn of
scorn,
The love of love.”

It could not be otherwise with a man who, like Arndt, was thoroughly in earnest; and unquestionably it was the echo which his glowing songs awakened in hearts of men who hated slavery, that made those songs so mighty in the appropriate moments they were uttered, so mighty in forming the mind of the free Germans of to-day, and so mighty in raising the courage and stirring the heart of the men who have sung them once more, in this awful year, by their watch-fires in Champagne and beneath the walls of Paris.

Such is no doubt the power of the patriotic song; but if we judge that by which Arndt is best known by ordinary poetic standards, we cannot critically praise it, unless we confound two things, and make poetic merit to consist in the mere expression of an idea. “ What is the German’s Fatherland? ” became and remained a great song, not for its poetry, but for its patriotism. The song, with its burden “ Our Fatherland must greater be,” is very well suited for a nation whose purpose was plunder, whose pretext was rectification of frontiers, and whose policy was annexation; and in such case we might call it a sort of geographical catechism done into irregular metre. But for German experience and German feeling, it had another purpose. It expressed a policy not of annexation, but of union; not of conquest, but of confraternity. It has given a motto easy of remembrance, interpreted in short and simple phrase an instinct of which each thinking German is conscious to himself; he feels that the old

patriotic bard was right about his Fatherland, that

“ So weit die deutsche Zunge klingt
Und Gott im Himmel Lieder singt,
Das soll es sein! ”

This famous song or hymn — for, with its large scope, its confident faith, and its deep reverence, it may well be called a hymn — we abstain from giving in the original, since nearly all the readers whom our subject interests must, in some sort, be acquainted with it; and we abstain from translating it, unwilling to add another to the long list of failures in that difficult task. It is not translatable; like Luther’s famous hymns, the subtle spirit evaporates when we attempt to transfuse its essence. Just in proportion as a national song is terse, direct, and vigorous, the difficulties of its translation are multiplied. The best translations very often are happy paraphrases; but short sentences and direct statements will not admit of paraphrase. The bard of battle girds his loins to sing as he strikes; and his song, like himself, is succinct; neither its metre nor its method can be transferred to a foreign tongue. The man must know Germans, feel for Germans, see Germans, judge their thoughts, hear their speech, learn their yearnings, before he can comprehend at all the strange power of that Fatherland song; and the more fully he comprehends this, the more hopeless he feels is the effort to translate it.

But we must not leave our reader without some specimen of Arndt’s poetic power. His national songs were struck out like hot sparks, as we have said in his words, “ upon the glowing anvil of the time; ” and so we find most of the momentous battles, and most of the distinguished heroes of the Liberation War celebrated in his fiery song. We give here as an instance a call to combat of the date 1812, entitled “ The Ancient and Modern Germans,”* of which we subjoin a translation: —

“ Our fathers of old were renowned
As valorous lions in war,
Gigantic they seemed to the weaklings,
Their swordstrokes cleft deep and swept
far;
Their spears sped through horse and through
rider,
Like lightning through breastplate and
helmet;
God only could make them to tremble,
And virtue was wisdom with them.”

* Poems, p. 120.

“ Of Rome the bloodthirsty battalions
Tormented the world they enslaved,
Degraded by wine and by women,
By gold and indulgence depraved;
They boasted that earth was created
For Rome and for Romans alone,
And bore them as tyrants, regarding
The fortune of war as their own.

“ Till at last the free Germans arising,
Marched down from the Danube and Rhine,
Rushed on with their broad flying banners,
And broke through the proud battle-line;
To combats they went as to dances,
Those champions so valiant and good,
And crimsoned their far-reaching lances
And terrible broadswords with blood.

“ They were fighting for freedom, for honour,
For God, for their rights, for their land;
They swept down their worthless oppressors,
As whirlwinds sweep forward the sand;
They shattered the bond that had fettered
Their suffering peoples in twain,
Wiped out their past sins and disgraces,
And built up their nation again.

“ Such as these were the Germans of old —
Such as these were, Oh! German, art thou ?
Canst thou bear to be scourged like a cur ?
Canst thou cringe, like a cur, to the blow ?
Caust thou shrink, like a pitiful coward,
From meeting the death of the brave;
But to eat, 'neath the eye of thy drivers,
The mean daily bread of the slave ?

“ Canst thou serve with the Frank so deceitful,
Enslaved by a monster so foul;
When thy bear-leader stirs thee for dancing,
Canst thou dance, and not utter a growl ?
Shall his ring through thy nostril be passed,
On thy lips shall his muzzle be laid,
Till he make thee a hare from a lion,
Till he change the war-horse to a jade ?

“ No longer! To arms! Clutch thy weapon!
The delivering steel seize amain!
Arise, though thy vengeance be bloody,
Quick, conquer thy freedom again!
Uncover thy far-flying banner,
Let thy sword flash its glittering fires,
And show thee, at last, a free German,
And worthy the fame of thy sires!

“ No longer! shout! shout! and enkindle
The flame of just vengeance afar;
And shake the proud soul of thy tyrant
With the terrible trumpet of war.
On mountain and hill sound the clarion,
Ring out the loud bells from each spire,
And pursue him with buffets of battle,
And the crash of the loud cannon-fire!

“ So drive off our drivers detested,
Follow up that proud chase of delight,
And harass their plundering legions,
With terror by day and by night;

And ne'er sheathe the sword in its scabbard
Till over the beautiful Rhine,
We unite in full freedom and gladness
The bonds of the German Verein.”

We have selected this as a specimen of the force and fire which made an inspiration of so many a battle-song of Arndt's. We seem as we read it, foreign as we are to the race it was addressed to, to feel our spirit stirred. What must have been the power of such songs on those who knew and felt a real slavery and were panting for release?

To those for whom these songs were written, their language was not merely patriotic, it was devout. With all his energy of hatred against his country's oppressors, Arndt's heart in this great matter trusted in God, and he expressed the feeling that the cause of his country was a holy and sanctified cause, more strongly still in a “ Catechism,” with the following extraordinary title: —

“ Catechism for Germany's soldiers and defenders, wherein is set forth how a warrior should be a Christian man, and go to battle having God upon his side.

“ Fear not, O land! be glad, and rejoice; for the Lord will do great things.” — Joel ii. 21.”

This remarkable production of about fifty octavo pages was first printed in the summer of 1812 at St. Petersburg, again in 1813 at Königsberg, and reproduced by thousands in many other places during the War of Liberation. In twenty short chapters, touching in the most brief and incisive manner, and in Scriptural phrase, on such subjects as the origin of evil, dissension and war, justifiable and unjustifiable war, the Great Tyrant (Napoleon of course), trust in God, unity, soldiers' honour, freedom and fatherland, self-restraint in war, self-sacrifice, and so forth, he supplies the simplest answers to the many questions, the diretest resolutions of the many doubts, which might meet a man in taking up arms for his country. We subjoin a specimen or two of the style of this production: —

“ He who conquereth an oppressor is a holy man, and he who checketh pride doeth the work of God.

“ Such is the war that is pleasing in the sight of the Lord; and God in heaven counteth the drops of the blood that is shed therein.

“ He that falleth with the foremost in that combat, and adorneth the path of victory, *that* man's descendants are blessed for generations, and his children's children dwell in peace and honour. His memory is holy amongst his peo-

ple, and his descendants pray on the spot where he died for his country.

"But he who fighteth for tyrants, and draweth the murderous sword against the right, his name is accursed amongst his people, and his remembrance fadeth away from among men."

"He is accursed in the place where the ravens assemble themselves, and his honour is blasted on the gallows tree."

"And he who goeth forth to oppress freedom, and to enslave the innocent folk, that man raiseth the sword against the Lord God, and He that sendeth His lightnings from heaven shall smite him down."

After pointing out the sin of mere mercenary soldiering, and the error made in supposing military honour to be higher than any other, he says:—

"There is only one kind of honour and virtue, and that is the same for every man on earth."

"I will teach you what true soldiers' honour is.

"A brave soldier and warrior will fight to the death for his rightful king and master, and for the safety and honour of his country. A brave soldier will love his fatherland and fellow-countrymen above all things, and gladly shed the last drop of his blood for the sake of his endangered country."

"A brave soldier will always have God before his eyes, and God's law written in his heart, so that no power shall compel him to act against the law of God."

"*A brave soldier will not boast himself for the sake of worldly fame, nor be puffed up with vanity, but faithfulness to his fatherland will be his highest glory, and a quiet courage his brightest ornament.*

One other point in his patriotic writings may be noted, the absolute unselfishness with which he gives honour where honour is due, even though to do so he has to yield up old prejudices and modify old judgments. If he was outspoken always in his opinions, fearless of giving offence where he felt frankness to be needed, he seems, on the other hand, to have had a perfect exultation in giving praise where it was deserved. We have but to read his songs of Schill, of Blücher, of Gneisenau, of Scharnhorst, of Stein, of "the valiant King of Prussia," to see how fully he could abandon himself to the fine impulse of generous appreciation.

But we must bring our paper to a close. We have lingered perhaps too long over the earlier half of his life, but after all it was the part of his existence and the time of his activity most influential upon the opinions and character of men in the great crisis of German history in which we stand

to-day. Our notice must be brief of the remaining portion of his long career.

After the fall of Bonaparte, his banishment to Elba, and the brief history of the Hundred Days, Arndt removed to Bonn, where he undertook the Professorship of History in the newly-founded and now famous university. He there married his second wife, a sister of Schleiermacher, and built the pleasant house known to so many of our countrymen, as it stands on the Koblenzer Allée, surrounded by the garden his own hands used to cultivate, and looking over the broad Rhine as it flows down from Königswinter, reflecting on its bosom the beautiful Siebengebirge. Would we had, as far as the external history of this true patriot goes, no further word of sorrow or of suffering to tell; that we could feel that in such a post and such a place he had found, with the approval and the thankfulness of his country, the peace and contentment he deserved. But he had yet to learn the spirit and temper of the Prussian Government. He obtained his post, as we have said, in the autumn of 1817; in 1818, startled and depressed by the unworthy tendencies he already saw to be gaining ground in political circles, he published the fourth part of his "*Geist der Zeit*," and threw down the gauntlet before the reaction of the time. He published his book, appealing to the incontrovertible examples of the past, to warn men from the dangers of the future; fierce and firm and fiery as ever, the honest man delivered his conscience; but the spirit of the time which he exposed was against him. In January, 1819, an order of the Cabinet, censuring him for his writing, as unsuitable to his calling as an instructor of youth, threatened him with deprivation of his post, unless, in fact, he would consent to wear a muzzle. Worse was to come. His papers were seized in the summer, and in the autumn he was suspended from the exercise of his office. A so-called state-trial followed, conducted in the most unfair and irregular manner, which dragged its slow length along till the summer of 1822. It proved nothing against him, but it acquitted him of nothing; his papers remained in the hands of the police, and he himself was still condemned to inactivity. For one and twenty years! He was fifty when his post was given; he exercised his office for a year and a half, and only when over threescore years and ten was it permitted to one of the truest patriots that ever lived, to prove to absolute demonstration his innocence of the

charge of disloyalty which had been laid upon him. "All's well that ends well"—possibly; but if in all those many years of undeserved suspicion and unmurmuring patience his heart had broken in unutterable sorrow, and his wasted vigour been paralyzed in death, the world would have lost the model of a brave and honest man, and the country he loved and lived for would have earned irreparable shame. Happily he was spared to clear the name he had made, and, in the self-justification which the restoration of his papers enabled him to publish, to show how deeply rooted in his own heart and life were the principles of freedom, honour, and self-sacrifice, of trust in God, and patient endurance of suffering which he had preached to all his fellow-men.

King Friedrich Wilhelm IV. ascended the Prussian throne in the year 1840; to his honour be it said that one of his first spontaneous acts was to restore the wronged and suffering Arndt to the full exercise of his office; and any readers who knew Bonn at that time will remember the jubilation to which this tardy reinstatement gave occasion. He was immediately elected Rector or Head of the University for the following year, amidst the unexampled enthusiasm of the students, and was spared to live another twenty years in surprising vigour and activity of body and mind, and to die as much lamented as he had lived useful and famous.

We saw him last in his ninetieth year,

broken indeed, from what he had been, as men must be who pass so far the allotted span of life, but still a marvel of vitality and faith and heartiness. And even then there was a day of triumph for him upon earth. His ninetieth birthday was the occasion of rejoicings and congratulations to him from every part of the great Fatherland. Deputations of every sort, bands of military music heading a great procession of soldiers, civilians, faculties, students, professors; rapturous acclamations, answered by a last burning speech from the soul-stirred veteran himself; multitudinous gifts from anonymous donors, and numberless telegrams in honour of the day; such were the sights and sounds that moved the aged Arndt to the deepest depth of his comprehensive heart. This was on the 26th of December, 1859. Before the end of the following month another vast procession, less jubilant but as impressive, followed the dead hero to his quiet grave, and over his rest crowds of sorrowing compatriots sang one of his own touching hymns.

Thus simple, brave, and honest, without pride or pomp or wealth, yet rich in peace, in honour, and his country's love, this remarkable man lived and died. "He rests from his labours;" and we have but to look around to-day, and see how, reflected in the conduct of countless myriads of his people, the spirit that moved him is moving, to add the additional words the Scripture suggests—"and his works do follow him."

FEMININITIES.

A habit that ladies get into—A riding habit.

All girls are fond of steak—at least they love a tender line.

A lady in California sports a wardrobe valued at \$100,000.

The Rev. Ada C. Bowles is pastor of a church at Easton, Pa.

If a woman does keep a secret, it is pretty sure to be with *telling* effect.

A woman in Meriwether County, Ga., never had any finger or toe-nails.

In Brussels the milk carts are drawn by women and dogs hitched together.

A crusty old bachelor says he thinks it is woman, and not her wrongs, that ought to be redressed.

"Beauty and booty" was the cry of the young man, who kissed the girl and was kicked by her father.

In 1877, 148 persons committed suicide in New York City, of which number only twenty-five were women.

A bill to abolish actions for breach of promise of marriage has been introduced into the English House of Commons.

Woman consumes 86 buttons on her single pair of kid gloves, whereas man buttons his suspenders with a single nail.

To worship is to a woman always sweeter than to be worshipped. To worship, one must look up ; to be worshipped, one must look down.

The 1,600 young women of Cleveland who are pledged not to associate with young men of convivial habits, are getting terribly lonesome.

A fashionable young lady dropped one of her false eyebrows in a church pew, and badly frightened a young man next to her, who thought it was his moustache.

A German writer says a young girl is a fishing-rod ; the eyes are the hook, the smile the bait, the lover the gudgeon, and marriage the butter in which he is fried.

Two little girls were comparing progress in catechism study. "I have got to original sin," said one, "how far have you got?" "Oh, I'm beyond redemption," said the other.

Women will never get rich by making corsets in Hartford—nor probably anywhere else. The rates are twenty-five cents per dozen, and the cotton, which must be bought of the corset manufacturer, is deducted from the sum. There are thirteen stitches to the inch, and 5,000 stitches in one corset. An experienced needle-woman can complete a half-dozen in a day, and thus earn twelve-and-a-half cents.

THE LOVELS OF ARDEN: CHAPTER XXXIX.--LYING IN WAIT. CHAPTER XL--MR GRANGER

LADY AUDLEY'S SECRET

The Albion, A Journal of News, Politics and Literature (1822-1876); Dec 23, 1871; 69, 51; ProQuest

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was open; and Mr. Fairfax walked straight into the sitting-room, where the two boys were eating some extempore meal at a side-table under their mother's supervision; while Austin lounged with his back against the chimney-piece, smoking. He was a man who would have smoked during the culminating convulsions of an earthquake.

"Why, Austin, what the—I beg your pardon, Mrs. Austin—what does this mean?"

"It means Brussels by the three-fifteen train, my dear Fairfax, that's all."

"Brussels? With those children and that luggage? What, in Heaven's name, induces you to carry your family off like this, at an hour's notice?"

"It is not an hour's notice; they've had an hour and three-quarters. As to my reasons for this abrupt hegira—well, that involves rather a long story, and I haven't time to tell it today. One thing is pretty clear—I can't live in Paris. Perhaps I may be able to live in Brussels. I can't very well do worse than I've done here—that's one comfort."

At this Bessie Lovel began to cry—in a suppressed kind of way, like a woman who is accustomed to cry and not to be taken much notice of. George Fairfax flung himself into a chair with an impatient gesture. He was at once sorry for this man and angry with him; vexed to see any man go to ruin with such an utter recklessness, with such a deliberate casting away of every chance that might have redeemed him.

"You have got into some scrape, I suppose," he said presently.

"Got into a scrape!" cried Austin with a laugh, tossing away the end of one cigar and preparing to light another. "My normal condition is that of being in a scrape. Egad! I fancy I must have been born so.—For God's sake don't scold me, Bessie, if you want to catch the three-fifteen train! I go by that, remember, whoever stays behind—There's no occasion to enter into explanations, Fairfax. If you could help me I'd ask you to do it, in spite of former obligations; but you can't. I have got into a difficulty—pecuniary, of course; and as the law of liability in this city happens to be a trifle more stringent than our amiable British code, I have no alternative but to bid good-bye to the towers of Notre Dame. I love the dear disreputable city, with her lights and laughter, and music and mirth; but she loves not me.—When those boys have done gorging themselves, Bessie, you had better put on your bonnet."

His wife cast an appealing glance at George Fairfax, as if she felt she had a friend in him who would sustain her in any argument with her husband. Her face was very sad, and bore the traces of many tears.

"If you would only tell me why we are going, Austin," she pleaded, "I could bear it so much better."

"Nonsense, child! Would anything I could tell you alter the fact that we are going? Pshaw, Bessie! why make a fuss about trifles? The packing is over; that was the grand difficulty, I thought. I told you we could manage that."

"It seems so hard—running away like criminals."

Austin Lovel's countenance darkened a little.

"I can go alone," he said.

"No, no," cried the wife piteously; "I'll go with you. I don't want to vex you, Austin. Haven't I shared everything with you—everything? I would go with you if it was to prison—if it was to death. You know that."

"I know that we shall lose the three-fifteen train if you don't put on your bonnet."

"Very well, Austin; I'm going. And Clarissa—what will she think of us? I'm so sorry to leave her."

"O, by the way, George," said Austin, "you might manage that business for me. My sister was to be here at five o'clock this afternoon. I've written her a letter telling her of the change in my plans. She was in some measure prepared for my leaving Paris; but not quite so suddenly as this. I was going to send the letter by a commissionnaire, but, if you don't mind taking it to the Rue de Morny, I'd rather trust it to you. I don't want Clary to come here and find empty rooms."

He took a sealed letter from the mantelpiece and handed it to George Fairfax, who received it with somewhat of a dreamy air, as if of a man who does not quite understand the mission that is intrusted to him. It was a simple business enough, too—only the delivery of a letter.

Mrs. Lovel came out of the adjoining room dressed for the journey, and carrying a collection of wraps for the children. It was wonderful to behold what comforts, and scarves, and garters, and muffettes those juvenile individuals required for their equipment.

"Such a long cold journey!" the anxious mother exclaimed, and went on winding up the two children in woolen stuffs, as if they had been royal mummies. She pushed little papers of sandwiches into their pockets—sandwiches that would hardly be improved by the squeezing and sitting upon them that must needs undergo in the transit.

When this was done, and the children ready, she looked into the painting-room with a melancholy air.

"Think of all the furniture, Austin," she exclaimed; "the cabinets and things!"

"Yes; there's a considerable amount of money wasted there, Bessie; for I don't suppose we shall ever see the things again; but there's a good many of them not paid for. There's comfort in that reflection."

"You take everything so lightly," she said with a hopeless sigh.

"There's nothing between that and the Morgue, my dear. You'd scarcely like to see me framed and glazed there, I think."

"O, Austin!"

"Precisely. So let me take things lightly while I can now, Bessie, the time is up. Good-bye, George."

"I'll come down-stairs with you," said Mr. Fairfax, still in a somewhat dreamy state. He had put Austin's letter into his pocket, and was standing at the window looking down into the street, which had about as much life or traffic for a man to stare at as some of the lateral streets in the Bloomsbury district—Caroline-place, for instance, or Keppel-street.

There was a great struggling and bumping of porters and coachman on the stairs, with more exclamation than would have proceeded from stalwart Englishmen under the same circumstances; and then Austin went down to the couch with his wife and children, followed by George Fairfax. The painter happened not to be in debt to his landlord—a gentleman who gave his tenants small grace at any time; so there was no difficulty about the departure.

"I'll write to Monsieur Meristis about my furniture," he said to the guardian of the big dreamy mansion. "You may as well come to the station with us, George," he added, looking at Mr. Fairfax, who stood irresolute on the pavement, while Bessie and the boys were being packed into the vehicle, the roof of which was laden with portmanteaus and the painter's "plant."

"Well—no; I think not. There's this letter to be delivered, you see. I had better do that at once."

"True; Clarissa might come. She said five o'clock, though; but it doesn't matter. Good-bye, old fellow. I hope some of these days I may be able to make things square with you. Good-bye. Tell Clary I shall write to her from Brussels, under cover to the maid as usual."

He called out to the coachman to go on; and the carriage drove off, staggering under its load. George Fairfax stood watching it till it was out of sight, and then turned to the porter.

"Those rooms up-stairs will be to let, I suppose?" he said.

"But certainly, monsieur."

"I have some thoughts of taking them for—for a friend. I'll just take another look round them now they are empty. And perhaps you wouldn't mind my writing a letter upstairs—eh?"

He slipped a napoleon into the man's hand—by no means the first that he had given her. Now Year's day was not far past; and the porter remembered that Mr. Fairfax had tipped him more liberally than some of the lodgers in the house. If monsieur had a legion of letters to write, he was at liberty to write them. The rooms up yonder were entirely at his disposal; the porter laid them at his feet, as it were. He might have occupied them rent-free for the remainder of his existence; it would have been supposed from the man's manner.

"If madame, the sister of Monsieur Austin, should come by and by, you will permit her to ascend," said Mr. Fairfax.

"I have a message for her from her brother."

"Assuredly, monsieur."

The porter retired into his den to meditate upon his good fortune. It was a rendezvous, of course, cunningly arranged on the day of the painter's departure. It seemed to him like a leaf out of one of those flabby novels on large paper, with muddy wood-cut on every sixteenth page, which he thumbed and poured over now and then of an evening.

George Fairfax went up-stairs. How supremely dismal the rooms looked in their emptiness, with the litter of packing lying about—old boots and shoes in one corner; a broken parasol in another; battered fragments of toys everywhere; empty color-tubes; old newspapers and magazines; a regiment of empty oil-flasks and wine-bottles in the den of a kitchen—into which Mr. Fairfax peered curiously, out of very weariness. It was only half-past three; and there was little hope of Clarissa's arrival until five. He meant to meet her there. In the moment that Austin put the letter in his hand some such notion flashed into his mind. He had never intended to deliver the letter. How long had he waited for this chance—to see her alone, free from all fear of interruption, and to be able to tell his story and plead his cause, as he felt that he could plead!

He walked up and down the empty painting-room, thinking of her coming, meditating what he should say, acting the scene over in his brain. He had little fear as to the issue. Secure as she seemed in the panoply of her woman's pride, he knew his power, and fancied that it needed only time and opportunity to win her. This was not the first time he had counted his chances and arranged his plan of action. In the hour he first heard of her marriage he had resolved to win her. Outraged love transformed itself into a passion that was something akin to revenge. He scarcely cared how low he might bring her, so long as he won her for his own. He did not stop to consider whether hers was a mind which could endure dishonor. He knew that she loved him, and that her married life had been made unhappy because of this fatal love.

"I will open the doors of her prison house," he said to himself, "poor fettered soul! She shall leave that dreary conventional life, with its forms and ceremonies of pleasure; and we will wander all over the earth together, only to linger wherever this world is brightest. What can she lose by the exchange? Not wealth. For the command of all that makes life delightful I am as rich a man as Daniel Granger, and anything beyond that is barren surplus. Not position; for what position has she as Mrs. Granger? I will take her away from all the people who ever knew her, and guard her jealously from the hazard of shame. There will only be a couple of years in her life which she will have to blot out—only a leaf torn out of her history."

And the child? the blue-eyed boy that George Fairfax had stooped to kiss in Arden Park that day? It is one thing to contemplate stealing a wife from her husband—with George Fairfax's class there is a natural antipathy to husbands, which makes that seem a fair warfare, like fox-hunting; but it is another to rob a child of its mother. Mr. Fairfax's meditations came to a standstill at this point—the boy blocked the line.

There was only one thing to be done; put on the steam, and run down the obstacle, as Isambard Brunel did in the Box-tunnel, when he saw a stray luggage truck between him and the light.

"Let her bring the boy with her, and he shall be my son," he thought.

Daniel Granger would go in for a divorce, of course. Mr. Fairfax thought of everything in that hour and half of solitary reflection. He would try for a divorce, and there would be no end of scandal—leading articles in some of the papers; no doubt, upon the immorality of the upper middle classes; a full-flavored essay in the *Saturday*, proving that Englishwomen were in the habit of running away from their husbands. But she should be far away from the brunt of that scandal. He would make it the business of his life to shield her from the slightest breath of insult. It could be done. There were new worlds, in which men and women could begin a fresh existence, under new names; and if by chance any denizen of the old world should cross their path intimately—well, such unwelcome wanderers are generally open to negotiation. There is a good deal of charity for such offenders among the travelled classes, especially when the chief sinner is lord of such an estate as Lyveden.

Yet, varnish the picture how one will, dress up the story with what flowers of fancy one may, it is at best but a patched and broken business. The varnish brings out dark spots in the picture; the flowers have a faded melancholic look, not the blossoms and dew of the garden; no sophistry can overcome the inherent ugliness of the thing—an honest man's name dishonored; two culprits planning a future life, to be spent in hiding from the more respectable portion of their species; two outcasts, trying to make believe that the wilderesses beyond Eden are fairer than that paradise itself.

His mother—what would she feel when she came to know what he had done with his life? It would be a disappointment to her, of course; a grief, no doubt; but she would have Lyveden; He had gone too far to be influenced by any consideration of that kind; he had gone so far, that life without Clarissa seemed to him unendurable. He paced the

THE LOVELS OF ARDEN

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LADY AUDLEY'S SECRET," ETC

(From Belgravia)

CHAPTER XXXIX.—LYING IN WAIT.

Mr. Granger went back to Yorkshire; and Clarissa's days were at her own disposal. They were to leave Paris at the beginning of March. She knew it was only for a very short time that she would be able to see her brother. It was scarcely natural, therefore, that she should neglect such an opportunity as this. There was so much in Austin's life that caused her uneasiness, he seemed in such sore need of wiser counsel than his poor empty-headed little wife could give him; and Clarissa believed that she had some influence with him that if he would be governed by the advice of any creature upon earth, that counsellor was herself.

So she spent her mornings in baby-worship, and went every afternoon to the Rue du Chevalier Bayard, where it happened curiously that Mr. Fairfax came even oftener than usual just at this time. In the evening she stayed at home—not caring to keep her engagements in society without her husband's escort—and resigned herself to the edifying companionship of Miss Granger, who was eloquent upon the benighted condition of the Parisian poor as compared with her model villagers. She described them sententiously as a people who put garlic in everything they ate, and never read their Bibles.

"One woman showed me a book with little pictures of saints printed upon paper with lace edges," said Sophia, "as if there were any edification to be derived from lace edges, and such a heathen book, too—Latin on one side and French on the other. And there the poor forsaken creatures sit in their churches, looking at stray pictures and hearing a service in an unknown tongue!"

Daniel Granger had been away nearly a week; and as yet there was no announcement of his return; only brief business-like letters, telling Clarissa that the drainage question was a complicated one, and he should remain upon the spot till he and Forley could see their way out of the difficulty. He had been away nearly a week, when George Fairfax went to the Rue du Chevalier Bayard at the usual hour, expecting to find Austin Lovel standing before his easel with a cigar in his mouth, and Clarissa sitting in the low chair by the fire, in the attitude he knew so well, with the red glow of the embers lighting up gleams of color in her dark velvet dress, and shining on the soft brown hair crowned with a coquettish little seal-skin hat—a *toque*, as they called it on that side of the Channel.

What was his astonishment to find a pile of trunks and portmanteaus on the landing, Austin's easel roughly packed for removal, and a heap of that miscellaneous lumber without which even poverty cannot shift its dwelling! The door

room, contemplating this crisis of his existence from every point of view, till the gray winter sky grew darker, and the time of Clarissa's coming drew very near. There had been some logs smouldering on the hearth when he came, and these he had replenished from time to time. The glow of the fire was the only thing that relieved the dreariness of the room.

Nothing could be more fortunate, he fancied, than the accident which had brought about this meeting. Daniel Granger was away. The flight, which was to be the preface of Clarissa's new existence, could not take place too soon; no time need be wasted on preparations, which could only serve to betray. Her consent once gained, he had only to put her into a hackney-coach and drive to the Marseilles station. Why should they not start that very night? There was a train that left Paris at seven, he knew in three days they might be on the shores of the Adriatic.

CHAPTER XL—MR GRANGER'S WELCOME HOME.

Clarissa left the Rue de Morny at three o'clock that day. She had a round of calls to make, and for that reason had postponed her visit to her brother's painting-room to a later hour than usual. The solemn dinner, which she shared with Miss Granger in stately solitude, took place at half-past seven, until which hour she considered her time at her own disposal.

Sophia spent that particular afternoon at home, illuminating the new gothic texts for her schoolrooms at Arden. She had been seated at her work about an hour after Clarissa's departure, when the door opened behind her, and her father walked into the room.

There had been no word of his return in his latest letter, he had only said generally in a previous episile, that he should come back directly the business that had called him to Yorkshire was settled.

"Good gracious me, papa, how you startled me!" cried Miss Granger, dabbing at a spot of ultramarine which had fallen upon her work. It was not a very warm welcome; but when she had made the best she could of that unlucky blue spot, she laid down her brush and came over to her father, to whom she offered a rather chilly kiss. "You must be very tired, papa," she remarked, with striking originality.

"Well, no; not exactly tired. We had a very fair passage; but the journey from Calais is tedious. It seems as if Calais oughtn't to be any farther from Paris than Dover is from London. There's something lop-sided in it. I read the papers all the way. Where's Clary?"

"Clarissa has gone to pay some visits."

"Why didn't you go with her?"

"I rarely do go with her, papa. Our sets are quite different; and I have other duties."

"Duties, pshaw! Messing with those paint-brushes; you don't call that duty, I hope? You had much better have gone out with your stepmother."

"I was not wanted, papa. Mrs. Granger has engagements which do not in the least concern me. I should only be in the way."

"What do you mean by that, Sophia?" asked her father sternly. "And what do you mean by calling my wife Mrs. Granger?"

"There are some people so uncongenial to each other, papa, that any pretence of friendship can only be the vilest hypocrisy," replied Sophia, turning very pale, and looking her father full in the face, like a person prepared to do battle.

"I am very sorry to hear this, Sophia," said Mr. Granger; "for if this is really the case, it will be necessary for you to seek some other home. I will have no one in my house who cannot value my wife."

"You would turn me out of doors, papa?"

"I should certainly endeavor to provide you with a more congenial—congenial, that was the word you used, I think—a more congenial home."

"Indeed I!" exclaimed Sophin. "Then I suppose you quite approve of all my stepmother's conduct—of her frequent, almost daily visits to such a person as Mr. Austin?"

"Clarissa's visits to Austin! What, in heaven's name, do you mean?"

"What, papa! Is it possible you are ignorant of the fact? I thought that, though my stepmother never talked to me of her visits to the Rue du Chevalier Bayard, you of course knew all about them. Though I hardly supposed you would encourage such an intimacy."

"Encourage such an intimacy! You must be dreaming, girl. My wife visits a portrait-painter—a single man?"

"He is not a single man, papa. There is a wife, I understand; though he never mentioned her to us. And Clarissa visits them almost every day."

"I don't believe it. What motive could she have for cultivating such people?"

"I can't imagine—except that she is fond of that kind of society, and of painting. She may have gone to take lessons of Mr. Austin. He teaches, I know."

Daniel Granger was silent. It was not impossible; and it would have been no crime on his wife's part, of course. But the idea that Clarissa could have done such a thing without his knowledge and approval, offended him beyond measure. He could hardly realise the possibility of such an act.

"There is some misapprehension on your part, Sophia, I am convinced," he said. "If Clarissa had wished to take drawing lessons from Austin, she would have told me so."

"There is no possibility of a mistake on my part, papa. I am not in the habit of making statements which I cannot support."

"Who told you of these visits? Clarissa herself?"

"O dear, no; Clarissa is not in the habit of telling me her affairs. I heard it from Warman; not in reply to any questioning of mine, I can assure you. But the thing has been so frequent, that servants have begun to talk about it. Of course, I always make a point of discouraging any speculations upon my stepmother's conduct."

The servants had begun to talk; his wife's intimacy with people of whom he scarcely knew anything had been going on so long as to provoke the gossip of the household; and he had heard nothing of it until this moment! The thought stung him to the quick. That domestic slander should have been busy with her name already; that she should have lived her own life so entirely without reference to him! Both thoughts were alike bitter. Yet it was no new thing for him to know that she did not love him.

He looked at his watch meditatively.

"Has she gone thero this afternoon, do you think?" he asked.

"I think it is excessively probable. Warman tells me she has been there every afternoon during your absence."

"She must have taken a strange fancy to these people Austin's wife is some old schoolfellow of Clary's, perhaps."

Sophia shook her head doubtfully.

"I should hardly think that," she said.

"There must be some reason—something that we cannot understand. She may have some delicacy about talking to me of these people; there may be something in their circumstances to—"

"Yes," said Miss Granger, "there is something, no doubt. I have been assured of that from the first."

"What did you say the address was?"

"The Rue du Chevalier Bayard, Number 7."

Mr. Granger left the room without another word. He was not a man to remain long in doubt upon any question that could be solved by prompt investigation. He went out into the hall, where a footman sat reading *Galipani* in the lamp-light.

"Has Mrs. Granger's carriage come back, Saunders?" he asked.

"Yes, sir; the carriage has been back a quarter of an hour. I were out with my mistress."

"Where is Mrs. Granger? In her own rooms?"

"No, sir, Mrs. Granger didn't come home in the carriage. We drove her to the Shangs Elys first, sir, and afterwards to the Rue du Cavalier Bayard, and Mr. Fairfax, he came down and told me my mistress wouldn't want the carriage to take her home."

"Mr. Fairfax—in the Rue du Chevalier Bayard!"

"Yes, sir, he's an intimate friend of Mr. Hostin's, I believe. Leastways, we've seen him there very often."

George Fairfax! George Fairfax a frequent guest of these people whom she visited! That slumbering demon, which had been sheltered in Daniel Granger's breast so long, arose rampant at the sound of this name. George Fairfax; the man he suspected in the past; the man whom he had done his best to keep out of his wife's pathway in the present, but who, by some fatality, was not to be avoided. Had Clarissa cultivated an intimacy with this Bohemian painter and his wife only for the sake of meeting George Fairfax, without her husband's knowledge? To suppose this was to imagine a depth of depravity in the heart of the woman he loved. And he had believed her so pure, so noble a creature. The blow was heavy. He stood looking at his servant for a moment or so, paralysed; but except that one blank gaze, he gave no sign of his emotion. He only took up his hat, and went quietly out. "His looks was orful!" the man said afterwards in the servants' hall.

Sophia came out of the drawing-room to look for her father, just a little disturbed by the thought of what she had done. She had gone too far, perhaps. There had been something in her father's look when he asked her for that address that had alarmed her. He was gone; gone *there*, no doubt, to discover his wife's motives for those strange visits. Miss Granger's heart was not often fluttered as it was this evening. She could not "settle to anything," as she said herself, but wandered up into the nursery, and stood by the dainty little cot, staring absently at her baby brother as he slept.

"If anything should happen," she thought—and that event which she vaguely foreshadowed was one that would leave the child motherless—"I should make it my duty to superintend his rearing. No one should have power to say that I was jealous of the brother who has robbed me of my heritage."

(To be continued)

HORTENSE.

(CONCLUDED.)

FROM the time of her separation from Duroc, and betrothment to Louis, a measure so repugnant to both, the happiness of Hortense was at an end. Young, inexperienced, and impulsive, she made no effort to conceal the aversion she felt for the husband thus forced upon her, and instead of endeavoring to win the affection of the amiable and high-minded Louis, she unwisely manifested her dislike to him openly. Louis also, who had received his beautiful bride most reluctantly, could not bow his pride to court affections which he believed still belonged to another, or to pursue her with attentions she would not deign to receive. Josephine saw the error she had committed, and mourned over it. Conscious that the first proposal of this ill-assorted union had emanated from herself, she now tried to repair the evil as far as lay in her power, and used every effort to promote friendly relations between her daughter and her husband. But her counsels, prayers, and remonstrances were all in vain; the estrangement between these victims of State policy increased from day to day. "Never," wrote Louis Bonaparte to a friend, "was there a more gloomy ceremony; never had husband and wife a stronger presentiment of the bitterness of a reluctant and ill-assorted union." And Madame Campan, who was at a ball given in honor of the event, states "that every countenance beamed with satisfaction save that of the bride, whose profound melancholy formed a sad contrast to the happiness she might have been expected to evince; she seemed to shun her husband's very looks lest he should read in hers the indifference she felt toward him."

There did indeed exist contrasts in the two which never would harmonize. Louis, although a soldier by profession, was not a soldier by nature. Nay, he had an innate antipathy to war, and mourned over the disasters entailed by it. He was not even ambitious. He loved retirement and study. Hortense, on the contrary, was endowed with an ardent temperament, to which ambition was by no means a stranger. Louis reproached her with frivolity and love of display; Hortense, on her side, would have preferred that Louis distinguished himself more with his sword than his pen. "Add to this," says our biographer,* "the fact of the marriage being imposed upon them, it is not strange that it continued to be obnoxious to both."

On the 10th of October, 1802, a first son was born, to whom was given the name of Charles Napoleon, and Louis is said to have congratulated the mother with infinite grace and sensibility; but it would appear from a letter of Madame Campan's, that Hortense did not reciprocate these demonstrations of affection. Madame Campan indeed blames her with merely want of demonstrative sensibility, but at the same time knew that in reality it arose from dislike to Louis. But although scandal was busy at that time, we are assured that she continued to be affectionate, modest, and natural in character. As a solace to her unhappiness, at this time, she especially cultivated those arts which constitute her imperishable crown. Napoleon was at length proclaimed Emperor of the French; Louis, like his other brethren, was recognized a prince of the imperial blood, and his second son, born on the 11th of October, 1804, received the name of Louis Napoleon. Eugène de Beauharnais was also created a prince, and Hortense became Princess Louis Bonaparte.

While Napoleon was busy placing on his head the old iron crown of Lombardy, Prussia was threatening the low countries and the north of France. Prince Louis Bonaparte received an order to organize an army in the north, which he effected with so much promptitude that in a month's time his head-quarters were established at Nimeguen; Prussia, now met on two sides—Holland and France—hesitated to act. Louis, on this, withdrew his troops, much to the dissatisfaction of the Emperor, who had his designs on that country—designs which this unambitious brother did not share in, nor did he even care for the vain and empty honor of a crown. Indeed, when, shortly afterward, the Batavian Republic was declared to be a hereditary sovereignty by Napoleon, and a deputation came to solicit him to accept the throne, he at once declined it. But when to his arbitrary brother he professed as an excuse that the climate did not agree with him, the latter said roughly, "It is better to die king than live a prince." And he was, like others, obliged to succumb to the indomitable will of the Emperor.

Hortense, called upon to share the sovereign power with her husband, was mainly cheered, we are told, by the thoughts of the additional amount of good it would be in her power to do. But it was not without violent regret that she tore herself away from her country and her mother, from whom she had never yet been separated except at rare and brief intervals.

The new King and his family quitted Saint Leu on the 15th of June, 1806, and arrived at

* E. Fourmont, *Auteur d'une étude sur Napoléon III.*

the Palace du Bois, near the Hague, on the 18th. Their public entry was made a few days afterward, and their reception was much more enthusiastic than was expected. King Louis was personally known to the Dutch, and was both loved and respected by them for his personal qualities, and the reputation of Hortense for goodness and benevolence having preceded her, her youth and beauty now came to add to the favorable feelings already awakened in her favor.

She made the court at once to assume a brilliant appearance. Almost all who surrounded her were young like herself, and the costumes adopted by the officers of the crown and public functionaries were in a style of magnificence hitherto unknown to the republican simplicity of the Dutch. Balls succeeded to festivals, and Queen Hortense, we are told, astonished all by the "incomparable perfection of her dancing."

Louis had accepted the throne with reluctance, but once at the head of affairs, he frankly associated himself with the interests of Holland. The Emperor had selected his household—one by one he got rid of them and surrounded himself with Dutchmen. He dismissed the French troops at once, and entered his capital with a national escort. M. de Broc, who had married Adèle Anguie, Hortense's bosom friend, was among those thus dismissed, but his wife remained with the Queen. "The comfort of a sincere and devoted friendship became," we are told, "at this epoch more and more essential to Queen Hortense."

It seems that from this time the misunderstandings which imbibited the lives of King Louis and his wife, and which had never before gone beyond mere coolness or indifference, increased. Their disagreements became the subject of public talk. Napoleon was displeased, and rated his brother roundly. "You have the best wife in the world, the most virtuous and good, and yet you make her miserable," said he. "Let her dance as much as she likes, it is pleasant at her time of life. My wife is forty years of age; I write to her from the field of battle to go to a ball. You want a woman of twenty years, surrounded by all the attractions of a court life, to live like a nurse, always washing her child." "Unfortunately," he added afterward, "you have a wife who is too good for you; if you had a coquette she would lead you by the nose."

A further source of discomfort arose from Hortense's continuing to favor the few French who remained, while Louis treated them with manifest coldness. In this respect perhaps Hortense was to blame, since supposing her to have associated herself more intimately with the policy of the sovereign, who constituted the

glory of France, more than his own brother did, gave rise to tales of scandal which required Napoleon himself to silence.

The war with Prussia, in 1807, separated the King and Queen for a brief time, and Hortense was enabled to visit her mother at Mayence. The death of their eldest son, Prince Napoleon Louis, who died after a few hours' illness of croup, in the same year, had a great effect on this ill-matched pair, and for once in their lives they mingled their tears in a common grief. Hortense took the loss so much to heart that her mother, the Empress, came to meet her at Lackerne, Brussels, whither the King conducted her. Nor was the grief of Louis much less, for Mademoiselle Avrillon relates that "the King himself was in a situation to excite pity; overwhelmed with grief, he was likewise suffering in health to such an extent that he could scarcely walk." Distraction and change of scene were recommended as a cure for such poignant grief, and the baths of Cauterets, in the Pyrenees, was the place selected, where she was soon afterward joined by the King. She made long excursions on horseback and on foot, many reminiscences of which yet remain. The house in which she dwelt is known, and the barn in which she was sheltered all night in a storm is still called "Grange de la Reine Hortense." A little pyramid on the bridge over the Gave near Pierrefitte still exists on which is engraved, "La Vallée de Baréges à la Reine Hortense, 1807."

After a month's residence at Cauterets the Queen of Holland returned to St. Cloud. The King had, at the same time, gone back to his States, which it was his wish to govern in the sense of their true interests. These interests, being essentially commercial, were unfortunately opposed to the policy of the Emperor, and hence arose misunderstandings between Louis and Napoleon; and as Hortense sided with the latter, the breach between the King and Queen of Holland widened daily, and Louis Bonaparte was, in every sense of the word, a most miserable man. Their want of harmony was no longer concealed, and after the birth of a third son, which occurred on April 20, 1808—the recent Emperor—their married life ended. The Prince to whom was given the name of Charles Louis Napoleon, was not baptized until the 10th of November, 1810, when the ceremony was performed at Fontainebleau by Cardinal Fesch, and was held over the font by the Emperor and Empress Marie Louise.

Although Napoleon greatly disapproved of Hortense's conduct at this epoch, he did not lose his affection for her nor withdraw his favor,

although even then meditating the severest blow against her peace; namely, the repudiation of Josephine. Scandal, too, was busy with her name; her most innocent actions were misrepresented, and different versions of her conduct were given at this time which, coming to her ears, imbibed her life. A celebrated writer, in his biography of Louis Napoleon, says, "Louis had determined to conciliate the Dutch, but that the Queen lived in a circle of frivolity and folly, and with her French courtiers was constantly ridiculing the Dutch, and endeavoring to reproduce a second Paris among the dykes of Holland." Heart-stricken and weary of the form of courts, and in a state of great physical debility, Hortense quitted Holland, to which after this time she only returned at intervals, in order to seek a better climate, and proceeded to St. Leu, a beautiful estate owned by Louis Bonaparte at some distance from Paris, but soon left it and went to the capital, in order to be with her mother, whom she deemed it her duty to comfort, although evil tongues said "she wished to be near the Emperor."

It was at that time confidently believed that Napoleon looked to Hortense's children as his successors, until the death of her eldest son, when the idea of a divorce from Josephine first presented itself to his mind. It seemed hardly credible, however, that this should be the case when her two younger sons, of whom he manifested great fondness, yet remained. When her youngest son, Louis Napoleon, was born, his advent as a prince of the Empire was welcomed in Paris by the thunders of cannon and by military salutes all along the lines of the Imperial army, from Hamburg to Rome, and from the Pyrenees to the Danube. The family of Joseph having been excluded from the succession to the Imperial throne by the Senatus Consultum of 1804, and Lucien, the second brother, not even recognized as an Imperial prince on account of his marriage and his opposition to Napoleon's policy, the two sons of Hortense and Louis Bonaparte were, by a decree of the Senate in 1808-9, declared heirs to the throne of France should Napoleon die without children. This decree of the Senate was submitted to the French people, and was adopted with wonderful unanimity, and they were looked upon as the only hereditary princes until the King of Rome was born. The youngest, however, was the Emperor's favorite, and Charles Louis Napoleon, after the return from Elba, then in his seventh year, stood by his side on the Champ de Mars, and was one of the last to embrace him at Malmaison when he left Paris forever.

In the year 1809 Napoleon appointed Hor-

tense princess protectress of all the Imperial houses of education. The same year the grand duchy of Berg, vacated by Murat for the throne of Naples, was made over to Napoleon Louis, who had become Prince Royal of Holland by the death of his brother. This done, he summoned a congress of sovereigns to Paris, among whom was the King of Holland. To the latter the Emperor declared his intention of occupying Holland with his troops if he did not uphold the continental blockade. Louis refused; the Emperor, as usual, would not yield, and Louis made up his mind to abdicate in favor of his son, the newly made Duke of Berg.

A still heavier blow than that brought about by a separation from her husband awaited Hortense at this epoch; namely, the divorce of Josephine, that saddest of all tragedies, and which constituted the great wrong and calamity of Napoleon's life. The event had a most important bearing upon the character and destiny of Hortense. With a cruelty unparalleled, and born of his supreme selfishness, he strangely enough selected Hortense and Eugene to convey the sad tidings to their mother, but he knew that he could rely upon their boundless devotion. The same children were also summoned to be present at the nuptials of the Emperor and Marie Louise, and the Queen of Holland was one of four to bear a corner of the mantle of the Empress who had usurped the place of her own mother.

When King Louis came to Paris, he never met the Queen save in public; but when his States were in danger, believing that her presence might be useful in affirming the allegiance of his subjects, he once more entreated her to go to Amsterdam, with which requests she always complied. On her last visit, however, the King treated her with so much indifference that it was then her evasion from St. Leu to Malmaison occurred. Napoleon highly disapproved this conduct; he believed that Louis loved her, but she not only did not reciprocate his affection, but could not tolerate his presence. "Had she remained in Holland," said he, "Louis would not have quitted Amsterdam; she would have been spared many trials and afflictions, and I should not have been obliged to unite Holland to the French empire—an act which contributed to my ruin in Europe." The French invaded Holland. For a moment Louis thought of resisting; but making a sacrifice of himself, he abdicated in favor of his son, and withdrew to Gratz, in Styria, under the name of the Count St. Leu.

This great change in her position in no ways shook the courage or resignation of Hortense,

who bore her complicated misfortunes with the steel-like endurance of a Spartan. She had resources in the education of her children, in consoling her mother, in her friendships and devotion to the arts. On the 20th of March, 1811, all France resounded with acclamations at the birth of the young King of Rome. Josephine was then at Navarre, a country-seat near Evreux which had been erected into a duchy for her benefit, and received from the hand of Napoleon himself the news of the birth of the son for whom so much was sacrificed, and from whom so much was expected. How truly has the old saying, "Man proposes but God disposes," been verified in this case! That son, so much desired and so warmly welcomed, is dead, and the descendant of Josephine, the repudiated, became ruler of France.

Hortense, we said, devoted herself to the education of her boys, and was rewarded in their docility and progress. The eldest had a remarkable memory; Charles Louis Napoleon, to whom was given the pet name of *Oni-Oni*—Yes-Yes—was also very quick and intelligent, and was admitted to take after his mother. Louis Bonaparte was fond of residing at his beautiful estate of St. Leu, for there he could indulge in his love of retirement and study. Here, notwithstanding their estrangement, he was occasionally joined by Hortense, and she was there with her children early in May, when Napoleon left Paris for the fatal campaign at Moscow. Louis was at this time a confirmed invalid; nevertheless, when the news reached him that the Empire was in danger, he left his beloved retreat, and went to Paris to look after Marie Louise, who had been intrusted to his care. She was at first removed to Blois, but the unselfish Hortense so far sacrificed herself as even to invite her to St. Leu.

In the latter part of this year, 1812, Napoleon commenced his disastrous retreat from Moscow. It was a time of indescribable anguish and suspense to Josephine and Hortense who were much together. At midnight, on the 18th of December, Napoleon arrived in Paris. From this time days of darkness began to lower around the Empire, and the Emperor, in order to counteract the gloom occasioned by the retreat from Moscow, ordered a succession of balls and festivals, and Hortense was called upon to aid in the movement. The great anxiety she had suffered, and the severe trials through which she had passed, had seriously affected her health, and in the Summer of 1813 she went to Aix, in Savoy, for the benefit of the waters. Her inseparable friend, Madame de Broc, accompanied her, and they made many

excursions together. One day they went to view a magnificent prospect which was to be seen from the summit of a mountain. The path led over a deep ravine through which a foaming mountain torrent, forming the cascade of Caecy, swept. Gloomy, indeed, was the place, surrounded by nature's wildness, and overshadowed with Alpine firs which hung over the torrent that dashed, roaring and foaming, over the rocks that opposed it. A frail bridge spanned the chasm; Hortense stepped fearlessly first upon it and passed over in safety; Madame de Broc followed. A cry of horror and a fearful crash caused Hortense to turn around, and she saw that the bridge had given way, and that her friend was falling into the rushing torrent, whose wild force was rapidly bearing her out of sight. Rescue was impossible. Only for a moment was her floating robe visible; the next the surging flood closed over her, and borne far away she was seen no more. She was only twenty-five years of age when this terrible accident occurred, and Hortense commemorated her sad loss by a monument, as also by founding a hospital for the relief of the indigent and world-weary.

Thus blow after blow fell upon the heart of poor Hortense, and the shock which this frightful occurrence gave to her nerves for a time threatened to dethrone her reason. But she was obliged to forget her own grief, in the great anxiety she felt for the Emperor, who was now in the battle-field. Disaster followed disaster; the allied armies were bearing down upon France with resistless force, and after the battles of Dresden and Leipsic, he was obliged to return to Paris in order to raise re-enforcements. But the surging billows of his foes, pressing him in all directions, could not be rolled back, and though he manfully resisted and often successfully, he was unable to compete with the unequal force arrayed against him.

Paris was captured by the allies; many had fled before this event, but the stout-hearted Hortense was one of the last to leave it. She had such implicit faith in the star of Napoleon that she could not be brought to believe that Paris would fall into the hands of the allies. It was only on the very eve of the capture that she was induced to move with her children to Versailles; but no sooner were they in bed sleeping the sweet sleep of youth, than they were awakened by the roar of cannon, and were obliged to seek refuge in the Petit Trianon, from whence they departed as soon as possible for Rambouillet. Here Hortense received orders from Louis to join the Empress at Blois, but she paid no attention to his instructions, and went to her mother at Navarre, where together

they heard of the capitulation of Paris, the demonstrations of the Royalist party, and the abdication of Fontainebleau.

The last acts of a grand drama, in which they had acted so prominent part, were now nearly played out. Josephine would have gladly shared Napoleon's exile, differing in this from Marie Louise, who thought only of saving herself. The one looked merely to the Emperor, the other to the man. Grief for his misfortunes hastened, indeed, Josephine's end—after the fall of Napoleon she had nothing to live for. How different was Marie Louise, whom Hortense met soon after at Rambouillet! "I expect my father every moment," said she; "your being here may annoy him," and thus dismissed her from her presence as readily as she dismissed from her mind the thoughts of the great man who had associated her with his fortunes. The Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia, however, made frequent visits to Josephine and Hortense at Malmaison. Louis Napoleon asked how it was that they, the sovereigns, should caress him when they were his uncle's enemies. "Because," he was told, "the Emperor is a generous enemy who wishes to be useful to you in your misfortunes." The Prince who, even at that early age, spoke little but observed a great deal, took a ring given him by his uncle Eugene, and approaching the Czar on tiptoe, slipped it into his hand and then ran away. When Alexander heard from the blushing boy that it was the only present he had to make to him, he attached the ring to his watch-chain, and said he would never part with it.

After the departure of the Emperor, Hortense went to Rambouillet to join Marie Louise, and endeavor to comfort her in these hours of perplexity and woe. The latter, however, soon set out under an Austrian escort for Vienna, and Hortense returned to her mother, whose safety at Malmaison was insured by the Emperor Alexander, who visited them frequently. In addition to this kindness, the beautiful estate of St. Leu, which Louis Bonaparte had owned and transferred to his wife, was, through his kind offices, erected into a duchy, and the right of inheritance secured to her children.

From this time Josephine declined rapidly. On the 10th of May the Czar dined at Malmaison, and notwithstanding that she was suffering acutely from a severe cold, she exerted herself to the utmost to entertain her guests. The night after she was worse, and at times delirious. Not long after this the Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia came to spend the day at Malmaison. Although her health was such that her friends urged her to remain in

bed, she insisted on rising to receive the allied sovereigns. However, she was unequal to the task, and Hortense had to supply her place as hostess. From this hour she grew worse, and on the 29th of May, 1814, she died. Eugene and Hortense were beside her, and the Czar of Russia was also in this death chamber. The funeral took place on the 2d of June. More than twenty thousand persons—monarchs, nobles, statesmen, and peasants—came to Malmaison, anxious to testify their respect for the departed Empress, who had made herself beloved of all. The former queens of France found a last resting-place in the royal cemetery of St. Denis, but Josephine, perhaps the flower of them all, was buried at St. Ruell in the little old church, founded long ago by the lords of Buzenval. A beautiful mausoleum of white marble representing the Empress kneeling in her coronation robes bears the simple inscription, "Eugene and Hortense to Josephine."

Hortense had been too long accustomed to look up to Napoleon not to hail his return from Elba with enthusiasm. Marie Louise, it is well known, decided on remaining in Austria. Hortense and her boys were present at the ceremony of the Champ de Mai, when the eagles were blessed, and a few days afterward Napoleon left to join the army. The battle of Ligny came to excite those momentary hopes and joys which were destined to be forever overthrown by the disaster at Waterloo. Hortense, faithful to Napoleon as she had been affectionate in his prosperity, hastened to meet and dine with him. Anxious to solace him in his sore affliction, she went to Malmaison to prepare for his reception. She had no hesitation in compromising herself nor cared, although she knew that she was by this act making an enemy of Louis XVIII. All she thought of was the welfare of the great man to whom she and her mother had through life been devoted. "Just before his departure he sent for his nephews to take leave of them. The parting was a sad one. The children wept bitterly and clung to him, the younger frantically exclaiming 'that he should go and fire off the cannon.'" Hortense found that the Emperor was departing almost without money. After much persuasion she succeeded in making him accept her beautiful necklace, valued at eight hundred thousand francs. She sewed it up in a ribbon which he concealed in his dress. He did not, however, find himself obliged to part with this jewel until on his death-bed, when he intrusted it to Count Montholon to be restored to Hortense. This devoted man acquitted himself successfully of the commission.

By her reception of Napoleon she had drawn

down the displeasure of Louis XVIII and the Royalist party, and fearing that the army and people would rally round her and her children as representatives of the Bonaparte dynasty, he assumed so threatening an attitude toward her that, fearing for the safety of her boys, she committed them to the care of a friend, a kind-hearted woman, who kept them carefully concealed. The allies, greatly exasperated at the French people for their cordial reception of the Emperor on his return from Elba, now turned all their wrath on Hortense. Even the Emperor Alexander treated her with marked coldness. The remains of her son, Charles Napoleon, who had died in Holland, had been, by the direction of the Emperor, deposited in the vaults of St. Denis, which was the royal cemetery. But now, so great was the jealousy of the Bourbons of the name of Napoleon, that the Government of Louis XVIII ordered the body to be removed immediately. Hortense obeyed without a murmur, and transferred the remains of her child to St. Ruell. Notwithstanding this jealousy, the allied sovereigns could not ignore the Imperial character of Napoleon or forget that the King of Holland had worn a crown recognized by all Europe, and they invariably addressed each of the princes as "Your Royal Highness."

The first volume of Hortense's history, perhaps the saddest one on record, closed with the fall of Napoleon. "Beautiful France" was no longer to be her home, and on the 19th of July she received an order commanding her to leave Paris in two hours. An armed guard was sent with her to secure her departure and to mark her retreat. She had now but one object in life; namely, the education of her boys, and to this she determined to devote her best energies. With every movement watched, friendless and heart-broken, the discrowned and exiled Queen of Holland set out on the 17th of July, 1815, at nine o'clock in the evening, with her two children, to commence her wanderings, not knowing where she should find a permanent home.

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART ABROAD.

MONTHLY NOTES PREPARED FOR PUTNAM'S MAGAZINE.

[Our Notes for this month are necessarily deferred until the next number.]

CURRENT EVENTS.

[OUR RECORD CLOSES DECEMBER 1.]

I. IN GENERAL.

November has been an eventful and uneasy month, furnishing for record a mingled row of occurrences of good and bad omen.

The most significant single fact of the month was the successful formal opening of the Suez Canal. This is an age of gigantic individual enterprises; but the vast undertaking of M. de Lesseps has been so powerfully carried onward to splendid success against a tremendous weight of political and financial indifference and hostility, not to mention the immense labor of civil engineering, as to stamp him a really great man.

A fleet of forty-five steamers has passed through the Canal and back again, including two vessels of the French *Messageries Impériales* of 2,400 tons burthen each: there is no question whatever that the canal is twenty

feet deep throughout, and can readily be deepened as much as requisite. Already the opening has caused a fall in rates of freight between Europe and Asia—a single fact which a thousand times outweighs the London criticisms on the sand along the Canal, and the coral, old chariot wheels, spirits, etc., in the bottom of the Red Sea.

Most of the other signs of the month are however colored with trouble or the fear of it. The course of the French Opposition, rapidly emboldened by the illness of Napoleon III. and the perfectly visible slackening of his hand upon the reins of government, points directly towards another revolution and republic at the earliest possible day.

There is news from England that another rising is expected in Ireland, and that it is in consideration to establish martial law once

more there, and strap down the island with a military strait-jacket.

As to Spain, she is still twisted and shaken with quarrels over her empty throne. Why might not some stern and heavy Ex-President with an inflexible policy, sit down on Spain and Reconstruct her—for a proper consideration? It would not be the first time—if Mr. Nast is right—that such a potentate would wear a crown, in semblance at least. The Spanish deficit for 1869 is twenty-eight million dollars in gold, and she must pay out to Cuba instead of as usual drawing largely from her. And the war in Cuba trails bloodily and feebly along, by means of murder and arson rather than warfare, showing that neither party has any real military strength. There is a growing public sentiment in the United States in favor of recognizing the Cubans as belligerents. Four nations have done so already. The South Carolina Legislature has called on Congress to do so; and it would not be surprising if the deed should be actually done before these pages reach their readers.

Of other wars in the world little can be said. The Dalmatian insurrection against Austria seems to amount to but little, and if as reported it is one of Mazzini's plans, nothing better was to be expected of it. He is made for a plotter of failures. The Paraguayan war still lingers, burning in embers or little more. Apparently Lopez will really fight until he dies or runs away stark alone. There is a "revolution" in Venezuela. In Hayti, Salnave seems to be nearly driven out of power, the rebels against him having got possession of most of his land and sea possessions. In that event there will simply be another African General President. "It's of no consequence."

Within the United States there has been a state of what may be called sociological uneasiness rather than real trouble of any kind. The "hard but honest" policy of the Government has carried gold steadily downward, until it sank to from 121 to 122. At this point Secretary Boutwell, very curiously, refused to sell gold at the price he had himself carried it to, thus condemning his own policy. The result was, of course, an instant upward jump in gold, and a feeling of unpleasant uncertainty as to the future course of business.

There seems to be dawning upon the country anew, a question that has more than once been furiously battled over already; that of the Bible in Public Schools. The Roman

Catholics of Cincinnati, with the help of a part of the remainder of the population, have distinctly demanded that the Bible shall no longer be read in the Public Schools of that City. The local question is not, at this writing, decided. But it is really a national question, and the Romanist and Protestant press are very rapidly taking sides upon it. Nor is the mere question of the Bible in Schools the real one at issue. This is, the existence of the American Common School System, upon which the Romanists are thus making a false attack. The real assault is to be, the organization of Sectarian instead of Common Schools. There is too much sympathy for such a system in some of the Protestant sects, and the movement is a dangerous one. As well destroy our system of local self-government as our common school system. Apparently the best ground to take on the question is, to concede the exclusion of the Bible from Schools, to make up for it by more diligent church and home instruction in religion and the Bible, and to prepare to meet the opponents of Common Schools thus divested, as direct assailants of the moral and intellectual essence of our national strength, prosperity, and happiness.

The Woman's Suffrage movement has made another decided step in advance by its Cleveland Convention, and the organization, in the hands of what may be called the moderate wing, of a National Association.

In formal politics, little of real note has taken place. In the State elections of the month, the vote has been light, and the Republican majorities, on the whole, maintained as nearly as was to be expected, unless New York State be an exception. The victory of the Democrats there has flung the whole government, both of the State and city, helpless into the hands of their party, and every body is waiting to see whether they will dare repeal the excise law and destroy the Metropolitan Commissions, and thus leave the city to the uncontrolled rule of rum and roughs, as of old.

There has been a recent visible stimulus of centripetal tendencies towards the United States from territory just without it. Negotiations have been going on, in the unconstitutional and discreditable darkness, it should be noted, of "diplomacy," for doing some land-business or other with President Baez, of St. Domingo. There is an increase of activity among the annexationists of Canada. The Winnipeg colonists have driven out their British governor, and are demanding a sub-

stantial local independence. As these secluded people really can only get into the world by way of the United States, it is not strange that they should gravitate towards us. British Columbia again has for the second time petitioned the British Government, either to be freed from the outrageous tax of over \$100 (greenbacks) per year per soul for expenses of colonial government, or else to be dismissed to join the United States. These Northern borderers would make excellent citizens. As for the Africans of St. Domingo, they would not perceptibly further dilute our badly-weakened average of voting intelligence and morality.

II. UNITED STATES.

Nov. 2. At the Massachusetts State election, Claflin (Republican) is reelected over Adams (Dem.) and Chamberlain ("Working-man's") by a majority of 9,804 in a total vote of 138,510.

At the Wisconsin State election, Fairchild (Republican) is chosen Governor by 8,181 majority.

At the New York State election, Nelson (Democrat) is chosen Secretary of State by a majority of 20,556 in a total vote of 641,196, which is 268,554 less than last year's total, being a decrease of over 25 per cent. The other Democratic candidates were also chosen. The judiciary clause of the new State constitution was adopted by a small majority; the rest of the constitution rejected by a larger one.

Elder Heman Bangs, of the N. Y. East Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, dies at his house in New Haven. Mr. Bangs was born at Fairfield, Conn., Apr. 16, 1790; removed to New York State while young; was a pastor and elder in the Methodist Church for about half a century, and an energetic, successful, and influential laborer in his vocation, having, during his pastorate, admitted some 10,000 persons to the church.

Nov. 7. Rear-Admiral Charles Stewart dies at his home at Bordentown, N. J., aged 91. He was born in Philadelphia, went to sea as a cabin-boy at 13, rose to be captain in the East India trade, in 1798 received a commission as lieutenant in the U. S. Navy, served in the hostilities against Tripoli and the Mediterranean pirates, in 1812 commanded the *Constellation*, in 1813 was transferred to the *Constitution*, with whose fame and name he has ever since been identified, having, like the old ship, been long known as "Old Iron-sides."

Nov. 10. Major-General John E. Wool dies at his residence in Troy, N. Y., aged 86. He was born at Newburgh; when the war of 1812 broke out, he became a Captain in the 13th Infantry, and rose rapidly by gallantry and useful service, becoming a brevet Brigadier-General in 1826. His services during the Mexican war and at the opening of the Rebellion were of great importance. He was made full Major-General in May, 1862; and at the end of the Rebellion was retired from active service and has since lived at Troy.

Nov. 11. Robert J. Walker dies at Washington. He was born in 1801, at Northumberland, Pa.; became a lawyer at Pittsburg; in 1826 removed to the State of Mississippi; was a prominent and influential Democratic politician during Jackson's and the subsequent administrations; was chosen U. S. Senator in 1835; was Secretary of the Treasury under Polk, and one of the Governors of Kansas under Buchanan. He was a man of very considerable political and business ability, and of immense industry.

Nov. 12. Hon. Amos Kendall dies at his home in Washington. He was born in Dunstable, Mass., Aug. 16, 1789; studied law, succeeded ill; in 1816 became a Democratic politician and editor at Frankfort, Ky.; was an earnest advocate of Gen. Jackson's nomination, and during his administration was in office at Washington. He was Postmaster-General from 1835 to 1840. He was an early believer in Morse's telegraph, and received considerable wealth from his investments in it.

Nov. 12. The Old and New School Presbyterian General Assemblies, in session at Pittsburg, formally consummate their reunion, with profound feeling and great enthusiasm.

Nov. 16. The Legislature of Alabama ratifies, and that of Tennessee rejects, the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution.

Nov. 24. By order of the U. S. Government, the thirty gunboats recently built for the Spanish Government, of which fifteen are about ready for sea, are libelled at the docks in New York, and held to await the decision of an Admiralty Court on the question whether or not the rules of international law permit their delivery to Spain.

Nov. 24. A convention is held at Cleveland to organize a National Woman's Suffrage Association. It contained sixty-three delegates, from thirteen States. There was speaking; and the proposed organization was effected, Rev. H. W. Beecher being chosen President.

with a proper staff of Vice-Presidents, etc. The Corresponding Secretary is Mrs. Myra Bradwell, Chicago.

Nov. 25. Mr. A. D. Richardson, a well-known newspaper writer and author, is shot in the Tribune Office by D. McFarland, in consequence of Mr. Richardson's attachment to McFarland's divorced (?) wife. This is the second time McFarland has shot Richardson, who lingers a few days and dies.

Nov. 28. Isaac C. Pray, well known as a literary man and in particular as a dramatist and dramatic instructor, dies at his residence in New York, in his 56th year.

Dec. 1. The National Debt of the United States has been decreased during November by the sum of \$7,571,454.13.

III. FOREIGN.

Nov. 2. Gov. McDougall, of Winnipeg Territory, in British America, is to-day escorted over the border of his jurisdiction into Dakota Territory by a strong force of French half-breed settlers, who repudiate their proposed fusion with "the Dominion," and want a colonial independence, subject only to the Crown. The Governor had but just arrived to assume his office.

Nov. 4. George Peabody dies at his residence in London. He was born at Danvers, Mass., in 1795; was a clerk and merchant at Danvers, Thetford, Vt., Newburyport, Georgetown, D. C., and Baltimore; in 1829 became the head of the house of Peabody, Riggs & Co.; in 1837 removed to London, and in 1841 went into the banking business, in which he accumulated great wealth. Mr. Peabody's public charities include donations of \$500,000 for a public library at Baltimore; \$1,250,000 to erect comfortable dwellings for the poor in London; \$1,000,000, afterward considerably increased, as a fund for stimulating the Southern States to organize good common schools; and some smaller ones.

Nov. 6. Henri Rochefort returns to Paris from his exile at Brussels. The French police stopped him on the frontier, but by order permitted him to proceed. He at once

set about addressing the people as a candidate for the Legislature.

Nov. 17. The ceremonies of the opening of the Suez Canal begin with a blessing, given by Father Bauer, almoner of the Empress Eugenie. The Empress, the Emperor of Austria, the Viceroy of Egypt, the Princes of Prussia and Holland, many dignitaries, and an immense crowd of other spectators, were present.

Nov. 22. At the supplementary elections for the French Legislature, Henri Rochefort was chosen from the First Circumscription of Paris.

Nov. 23. A telegram is received in London from the Governor of Bombay, saying that he had received a letter from Mr. Livingstone, the African traveller, dated Ujiji, May 13, 1869. Mr. Livingstone was in good health and spirits, and had been well treated everywhere.

— The French Empress, having gone in her yacht *L'Aigle*, together with a fleet of 44 other steamers, averaging 1000 tons burthen, through the Suez Canal and back, reaches Port Said to-day on her return.

Nov. 29. Giulia Grisi, the famous Italian singer, dies at Berlin, aged 57.

— The French Legislature sits, and is addressed by the Emperor, whose speech includes observations upon the recent "excesses of the pen and of public assemblages," a declaration that France wants "liberty with order," the speaker's personal guarantee of order, his appeal for the help of the Legislature toward granting liberty, an enumeration of certain reforms to be granted, a declaration that the condition of France is satisfactory, and a view of the progress of the age in material and moral achievement. The proposed reforms, the Emperor intimates, are to constitute, on the whole, "a more direct participation of the nation in its own affairs," and they include, among other items, election of municipal officials by universal suffrage, improved primary education, cheaper justice, and reduced taxes. The French Opposition is not satisfied with the speech.

Silk Brush, Figs. 1 and 2.

See illustration on page 44.

The cover of this brush is of gray cloth, embroidered with maroon silk, soutache, and saddler's silk, and with silk ribbon cord of the same color. The brush consists of sat tassels of gray and maroon worsted. Wind black cotton several times tightly about a strand of gray zephyr worsted twenty threads thick, and about a maroon zephyr worsted strand of the same thickness, at intervals of an inch and three-quarters; tie the ends of the cotton together each time, and cut them off. Cut the strand in the middle between every two points tied together, fold each separate piece double, again tie the black cotton on these thread tassels half an inch below the middle, and clip the ends off evenly. Sew the worsted tassels close beside each other on coarse perforated board cut in one piece given on Fig. 27, Supplement; and doing this the design given on Fig. 2, which shows the under side of the brush, must be carefully observed. For the upper surface of the brush cut out card-board, muslin, and gray cloth one piece each from Fig. 27, Supplement, and of the same material, one straight strip three-quarters of an inch wide for the edge; leave a quarter of an inch extra material on the outer edge of the muslin pieces. Work the embroidery on the cloth pieces as indicated on Figs. 27 and 28, Supplement, and observing the illustration, Fig. 1, and overhand the piece of cloth intended for the upper surface and the edge together. Cover the joining seam with soutache; in sewing on the round cord form a loop to hang up the brush, as shown by Fig. 1. Cover the card-board pieces with muslin, join the upper surface with the edge, on the inside of the latter set fringe made of maroon worsted, and sew the piece of perforated board furnished with worsted tassels on the card-board surface covered with muslin. Finally, sew the embroidered cover on the brush.

Gentleman's Embroidered Boot, Figs. 1 and 2.

See illustration on page 44.

This gray cloth boot is ornamented in chain stitch embroidery with black saddler's silk and an edge trimming in flat loop stitch, and is furnished with a flannel lining and a felt sole. Cut of material and lining one piece each from Figs. 51 and 52, Supplement, cut the slit indicated on Fig. 52, and work the embroidery on the outer material as indicated on the pattern. Join first the material and then the lining according to the corresponding figures, press out the seams, and fasten the lining into the boot in such a manner that all the edges of the seams come between the lining and material. Sew the felt sole, which is cut from Fig. 53, Supplement, to the boot according to the corresponding figures; this sole is covered on the inside with a sole of flannel button-hole stitched all around. Run the edge of the material together at the top of the boot. For the trimming on the outer edge work flat loop stitc with black gray eight-fold tapestry worsted according to Fig. 59, Supplement, but only on the upper edge to the straight line. To do this make a foundation to suit the upper circumference of the boot, and on this knit as shown by illustration, Fig. 1, on page 749 of *Harper's Bazaar*, No. 47, Vol. IV. When this part is of the requisite size, join the ends together and sew it on the boot. Instead of the knitted strip a strip of fur can be used, and the outer parts of the boot may be worked in tapestry; illustration, Fig. 2, gives a suitable design for doing this.

Rug with Application Embroidery.

See illustration on page 44.

This rug consists of a piece of black cloth forty-six inches long and thirty inches wide, ornamented around the edge in application embroidery, and finished in the centre with a design. Black woolen cord four inches wide finishes the edge. Cut a piece of black cloth of the requisite size, and transfer the design, a section of which is given by Fig. 25, Supplement, to a piece of maroon cloth forty-five inches long and twenty-nine inches wide, in such a manner that an edge half an inch wide is left free all around. Fasten the piece of maroon cloth on the black cloth so that the latter projects half an inch all around, and work the design in chain stitch with maroon saddler's silk, always passing the needle through both layers of material. Cut away the maroon material between the design figures, observing the illustration. Work a double chain stitch row of maroon silk half an inch from the outer edge of the rug. Fasten the deer-skin on the middle of the rug, line the latter with coarse gray linen, and furnish it with fringe and maroon woolen cord as shown by the illustration.

THE LOVELS OF ARDEN.

By MISS BRADDON,

AUTHOR OF "LADY AUDLEY'S SECRET," ETC.

CHAPTER XLII.

CLARISSA'S ELOPEMENT.

MR. FAIRFAX came a little after noon—came with a calm, grave aspect, as of a man who had serious work before him. With all his heart he wished that the days of dueling had not been over; that he could have sent his best friend to Daniel Granger, and made an end of the quarrel in a gentleman-like way, in some obscure alley at Vincennes, or amidst the shadowy aisles of St. Germain. But a duel nowadays is too complete an anachronism for an Englishman to propose in cold blood. Mr. Fairfax came to his enemy's house for one special purpose. The woman he loved was in Daniel Granger's power; it was his duty to explain that fatal meeting in Austin's rooms, to justify Clarissa's conduct in the eyes of her husband. It was not that he meant to surrender his hope of their future union—indeed, he hoped that the scene of the previous evening would bring about a speedy separation between husband and wife. But he had placed her in a false position; she was innocent, and he was bound to assert her innocence.

He found Daniel Granger like a man of iron, fully justifying that phrase of Lady Laura's—"Carre par le base." The ignominy of his own position came fully home to him at the first moment of their meeting. He remembered the day when he had liked and respected this man: he could not despise him now.

He was conscious that he carried the mark of last night's skirmish in an unpleasantly conspicuous manner. That straight-out blow of Daniel Granger had left a discoloration of the skin—what in a meaner man might have been called a black eye. He, too, had hit hard in that brief tussle; but no stroke of his had told like that blow of the Yorkshireman's. Mr. Granger bore no trace of the encounter.

The two men met with as serene an air as if they had never grappled each other savagely in the twilight.

"I considered it due to Mrs. Granger that I should call upon you," George Fairfax began,

"in order to explain her part in the affair of last night."

"Go on, Sir. The old story, of course—Mrs. Granger is spotless; it is only appearances that are against her."

"So far as she is concerned, our meeting yesterday afternoon was an accident. She came there to see another person."

"Indeed! Mr. Austin, the painter, I suppose—a man who painted her portrait, and who had no farther acquaintance with her than that. A very convenient person, it seems, since she was in the habit of going to his rooms nearly every afternoon; and I suppose the same kind of accident as that of yesterday generally brought you there at the same time."

"Mrs. Granger went to see her brother."

"Her brother?"

"Yes, Austin Lovel; otherwise Mr. Austin, the painter. I have been pledged to him to keep his identity a secret; but I feel myself at liberty to break my promise now—in his sister's justification."

"You mean that the man who came to this house as a stranger is my wife's brother?"

"I do."

"What duplicity! And this is the woman I trusted!"

"There was no voluntary duplicity on your wife's part. I know that she was most anxious you should tell the truth."

"You know! Yes, of course; you are in my wife's confidence—an honor I have never enjoyed."

"It was Austin who objected to make himself known to you."

"I scarcely wonder at that, considering his antecedents. The whole thing has been very cleverly done, Mr. Fairfax, and I acknowledge myself completely duped. I don't think there is any occasion for us to discuss the subject further. Nothing that you could say would alter my estimation of the events of last night. I regret that I suffered myself to be betrayed into any violence—that kind of thing is behind the times. We have wiser remedies for our wrongs nowadays."

"You do not mean that you would degrade your wife in a law court!" cried Mr. Fairfax. "Any legal investigation must infallibly establish her innocence; but no woman's name can escape untaunted from such an ordeal."

"No, I am not likely to do that. I have a son, Mr. Fairfax. As for my wife, my plans are formed. It is not in the power of any one living to alter them."

"Then it is useless for me to say more. On the honor of a gentleman, I have told you nothing but the truth. Your wife is innocent."

"She is not guiltless of having listened to you. That is quite enough for me."

"I have done, Sir," said George Fairfax, gravely, and with a bow and a somewhat cynical smile, departed.

He had done what he felt himself bound to do. He had no ardent wish to patch up the broken union between Clarissa and her husband. From the first hour in which he heard of her marriage he had held it in jealous abhorrence. He had very little compunction about what had happened. It must bring matters to a crisis, he thought. In the mean time, he would have given a great deal to be able to communicate with Clarissa, and began accordingly to deliberate how that might best be done.

He did not deliberate long; for while he was meditating all manner of roundabout modes of approach, he suddenly remembered how Austin Lovel had told him he always wrote to his sister under cover to her maid. All he had to do, therefore, was to find out the maid's name.

That would be easy enough, Mr. Fairfax imagined, if his servant was good for any thing. The days of Leporelo are over; but a well-bred valet may still have some little talent for diplomacy.

"My fellow has only to waylay one of Granger's grooms," Mr. Fairfax said to himself, "and he can get the information I want readily enough."

There was not much time to be lost, he thought. Mr. Granger had spoken of his plans with a certain air of decision. Those plans involved some change of residence, no doubt. He would take his wife away from Paris; punish her by swift banishment from that brilliant city; bury her alive at Arden Court, and watch her with the eyes of a lynx for the rest of his life.

"Let him watch you never so closely, or shut you in what prison he may, I will find a door of escape for you, my darling," he said to himself.

The mistress and maid were busy, meanwhile, making arrangements for a sudden flight. There was very little packing to be done; for they could take nothing, or scarcely any thing, with them. The great difficulty would be to get the child out of the house. After a good deal of deliberation, they had decided the manner in which their attempt was to be made. It was dusk between five and six; and at dusk Jane was to go to the nursery, and, in the most innocent manner possible, carry off the boy for half an hour's play in his mother's dressing-room. It was fortunately a usual thing for Clarissa to have him with her at this time, when she happened to be at home so early. There was a dingy servants' staircase leading from the corridor to the ground-floor; and down this they were to make their escape unnoticed, the child bundled up in a shawl, Jane Target having slipped out beforehand and hired a carriage, which was to wait for them a little way off in the side street. There was a train leaving Paris at seven, which would take them to Amiens, where they could sleep that night, and go on to Brussels in the morning. Once in Brussels, they must contrive somehow to find Austin Lovel.

Of her plans for the future—how she was to live separated from her husband, and defying him—Clarissa thought nothing. Her mind was

wholly occupied by that one consideration about her child. To secure him to herself was the end and aim of her existence.

It was only at Jane's suggestion that she set herself to calculate ways and means. She had scarcely any ready money—one five-pound note and a handful of silver comprised all her wealth. She had given her brother every sixpence she could spare. There were her jewels, it is true—jewels worth three or four thousand pounds. But she shrank from the idea of touching these.

While she sat with her purse in her hand, idly counting the silver, and not at all able to realize the difficulties of her position, the faithful Jane came to her relief.

"I've got five-and-twenty pounds with me, ma'am, saved out of my wages since I've been in your service; and I'm sure you're welcome to the money."

Jane had brought her little hoard with her, intending to invest some part of it in presents for her kindred—a shawl for her mother, and so on; but had been disappointed, by finding that the Parisian shops, brilliant as they were, contained very much the same things she had seen in London, and at higher prices. She had entertained a hazy notion that cashmere shawls were in some manner a product of the soil of France, and could be bought for a mere trifle; whereby she had been considerably taken aback when the proprietor of a plate-glass edifice on the Boulevard des Italiens asked her a thousand francs for a black cashmere, which she had set her mind upon as a suitable covering for the shoulders of Mrs. Target.

"You dear good girl!" said Clarissa, touched by this new proof of fidelity; "but if I should never be able to pay you the money!"

"Stuff and nonsense, ma'am! no fear of that; and if you weren't, I shouldn't care. Father and mother are comfortably off; and I'm not going to work for a pack of brothers and sisters. I gave the girls new bonnets last Easter, and sent them a ribbon apiece at Christmas; and that's enough for them. If you don't take the money, ma'am, I shall throw it in the fire."

Clarissa consented to accept the use of the money. She would be able to repay it, of course. She had a vague idea that she could earn money as a teacher of drawing in some remote Continental city, where they might live very cheaply. How sweet it would be to work for her child! much sweeter than to be millionaire's wife, and dress him in purple and fine linen that cost her nothing.

She spent some hours in looking over and arranging her jewels. From all of these she selected only two half-hoop diamond rings, as a reserve against the hour of need. These and these only of Daniel Granger's gifts would she take with her. She made a list of her trinkets, with a *nota bene* stating her appropriation of the two rings, and laid it at the top of her principal jewel-case. After this, she wrote a letter to her husband—a few lines only, telling him how she had determined to take her child away with her, and how she should resist to the last gasp any attempt to rob her of him.

"If I were the guilty wretch you think me," she wrote, "I would willingly surrender my darling, rather than degrade him by any association with such a fallen creature. But whatever wrong I have committed against you—and that wrong was done by my marriage—I have not forfeited the right to my child's affection."

This letter-written, there was nothing more to be done. Jane packed a traveling-bag with a few necessary items, and that was all the luggage they could venture to carry away with them.

The afternoon post brought a letter from Brussels, addressed to Miss Jane Target, which the girl brought in triumph to her mistress.

"There'll be no bother about finding Mr. Austin, ma'am," she cried. "Here's a letter!"

The letter was in Austin's usual brief, careless style, entering into no explanations; but it told the quarter in which he had found a lodgings; so Clarissa was at least sure of this friendly shelter. It would be a poor one, no doubt; nor was Austin Lovel by any means a strong rock upon which to lean in the hour of trouble. But she loved him, and she knew that he would not turn his back upon her.

The rest of the day seemed long and dreary. Clarissa wandered into the nursery two or three times in order to assure herself, by the evidence of her own eyes, of her boy's safety. She found the nurse-maid busy packing, under Mrs. Brobston's direction.

The day waned. Clarissa had not seen her husband since that meeting in the corridor; nor had she gone into any of the rooms where Miss Granger might be encountered. That young lady, painfully in the dark as to what had happened, sat at her table in the window, diligently illuminating, and wondering when her father would take her into his confidence. She had been told of the intended journey on the next day, and that she and her brother were to go back to Arden Court, under the protection of the servants, while Mr. Granger and his wife went elsewhere, and was not a little puzzled by the peculiarity of the arrangement. Warman was packing, complaining the while at having to do so much in so short a time, and knew nothing of what had occurred in the Rue du Chevalier Bayard after the dismissal of the carriage by Mr. Fairfax.

"There must have been something, miss," she said, "or your papa would never have taken this freak into his head—racing back as it was to the wags; and me not having seen half I wanted to see, nor bought so much as a pincushion to go home to my friends. I had a clear month before me, I thought, so where was the use of hurrying; and then to be scammed and harum-scarum off like this! It's really too bad."

"I have no doubt papa has good reasons for what he is doing, Warman," answered Miss Granger, with dignity.

"Oh, of course, miss; gentlefolks has always good reasons for their going-on!" Warman remarked, snappishly; and then "took it out" of one of Miss Granger's bonnets during the process of packing.

Twilight came at last, the longed-for dusk, in which the attempt was to be made. Clarissa had put on one of her darkest, plainest dresses, and borrowed a little black straw bonnet of her maid. This bonnet and her seal-skin jacket she deferred putting on until the last; for there was always the fear that Mr. Granger might come in at some awkward moment. At half past five Jane Target went to the nursery and fetched the year-old heir of Arden Court.

He was always glad to go to his mother; and he came to-night crowing and laughing, and kicking his little blue shoes in boisterous rapture. Jane kept guard at the door while Clarissa put on her bonnet and jacket, and wrapped up the baby—first in a warm fur-lined opera jacket, and then in a thick tartan shawl. They had no hat for him, but tied up his pretty flaxen head in a large silk handkerchief, and put the shawl over that. The little fellow submitted to the operation, which he evidently regarded in the light of an excellent joke.

Every thing was now ready. Clarissa carried her baby; Jane went before with the bag, leading the way down the darksome servants' staircase, where at any moment they might meet one of Mr. Granger's retainers. Luckily, they met no one; the descent only occupied about two minutes; and, at the bottom of the stairs, Clarissa found herself in a small square stone lobby, lighted by a melancholy jet of gas, and pervaded by the smell of cooking. In the next moment, Jane—who had made herself mistress of all minor details—opened a door, and they were out in the dull, quiet street—the side street, at the end of which workmen were scalping away a hill.

A few doors off they found the carriage, which Jane had secured half an hour before, and a very civil driver. Clarissa told the driver where to go, and then got in, with her precious burden safe in her arms.

The precious burden set up a wail at this juncture, not understanding or approving these strange proceedings, and it was as much as his master could do to soothe him. A few yards round the corner they passed a man, who looked curiously at the vehicle. This was George Fairfax, who was pacing the street in the gloaming in order to reconnoitre the dwelling of the woman he loved, and who let her pass him unaware. His own man was busy at the same time entertaining one of Mr. Granger's footmen in a neighboring wine-shop, in the hope of extracting the information his master required about Mrs. Granger's maid. They reached the station just five minutes before the train left for Amiens; and once seated in the railway carriage, Clarissa almost felt as if her victory was certain, so easily had the first stage been got over. She kissed and blessed Jane Target, whom she called her guardian angel; and smothered her baby with kisses, apostrophizing him with all manner of fond foolishness.

Every thing favored her. The flight was not discovered until nearly three-quarters of an hour after Clarissa had eloped with her baby down that darksome stair. Mrs. Brobston, luxuriating in tea, toast, and gossip before the nursery fire, and relieved not a little by the absence of her one-year-old charge, had been unconscious of the progress of time. It was only when the little clock upon the chimney-piece chimed the half hour after six that she began to wonder about the baby.

"His man's had him longer than ever," she said; "you'd better go and fetch him, Liza. Shell be wanting to dress for dinner, I dessay. I suppose she's going down to dinner to-night, though there's something up."

"She didn't go down to breakfast, nor yet to lunch," said Eliza, who had her information fresh and fresh from one of the footmen; "and Mr. Granger's been a-walking up and down the drawing-room as if he was a-doing of it for a wager, William Baker says. Mr. Fairfax come this morning, and didn't stop above a quarter of an hour; but William was outside the drawing-room door all the time, and there was no loud talking, nor quarreling, nor nothink."

"That Fairfax is a villain," replied Mrs. Brobston. "I don't forget the day he kissed baby in Arden Park. I never see any good come of a single gentleman kissing a lady's baby, voluntary. It isn't their nature to do it, unless they're a hankering after the mar."

"Lor, Brobston, how horful!" cried Eliza. And in this pleasant converse the nurse and her subordinate wasted another five minutes.

The nurse-maid frittered away a few more minutes in tapping gingerly at the dressing-room door, until at last, emboldened by the silence, she opened it, and peering in, beheld nothing but emptiness. Mrs. Granger had gone to the drawing-room, perhaps; but where was baby? and where was Jane Target? The girl went in search of her favorite, William Baker. Were Mrs. Granger and baby in the drawing-room? No; Mr. Baker had been in attendance all the afternoon. Mrs. Granger had not left her own apartments.

"But she's not there," cried Eliza, agast; "nor Target either. I've been looking for baby." She ran back to the dressing-room; it was empty, and the bedroom adjoining. Mr. Granger's dressing-room was beyond that, and she was there writing letters. At this door—this sacred door, the threshold whereof she had never crossed—Eliza the nurse-maid tapped nervously.

"Oh, if you please, Sir, have you got Master Lovel?"

"No," cried Daniel Granger, starting up from his desk. "What made you think him likely to be here?"

"I can't find him, please, Sir. I've been looking in Mrs. Granger's dressing-room, and every where almost. Jane Target fetched him for his ma close upon an hour ago; and Mrs. Brobson sent me for him, and I fancied as you might have got him with you, Sir."

Mr. Granger came out of his room with the lamp in his hand, and came through the bedroom to his wife's dressing-room, looking with that stern, searching gaze of his into every shadowy corner, as if he thought Clarissa and her baby might be playing hide-and-seek there. But there was no one—the cheval-glass and the great glass door of the wardrobe reflected only his own figure, and the scared nurse-maid peering from behind his elbow. He went on to the nursery, opening the doors of all the rooms as he passed, and looking in. There are some convictions that come in a minute. Before that search was finished, Daniel Granger felt very sure that his wife had left him, and had taken her child away with her.

In what manner and to what doom had she gone? Was her flight a shameful one, with George Fairfax for her companion? He knew now, for the first time, that in the depths of his mind there had been some lurking belief in her innocence, it was so supreme an agony to him to imagine that she had taken a step which must make her guilt a certainty. He did not waste much time in questioning the verbose Brobson. The child was missing—that was quite clear—and his wife, and his wife's maid. It was some small relief to him to know that she had taken the honest Yorkshire girl. If she had been going to ignominy, she would scarcely have taken any one who knew her past history—above all, one whom she had known in her childhood.

What was he to do? To follow her, of course, if by any means he could discover whether she had gone. To set the telegraph wires going, also, with a view to discovering her destination. He drove off at once to the chief telegraph office, and wrote a couple of messages, one to Mr. Lovel, at Spa—the other to Mr. Oliver, at Holborough Rectory; with a brief, stern request to be informed immediately if his wife should arrive at either place. There was Lady Laura Armstrong, her most intimate friend, with whom she might possibly seek a refuge in the hour of her trouble; but he did not care to make any application in that quarter, unless driven to do so. He did not want to make his wrongs public.

From the telegraph office he drove to the Northern Railway Station, and made minute inquiries about the trains. There was a train by which she might have gone to Calais half an hour before he arrived there. He enlisted the services of an official, and promenaded the waiting-rooms and platforms, the dreary chambers in which travelers wait for their luggage, to and fro between the barriers that torment the soul of the impatient. He asked this man, and several other men, if a lady, with her baby and maid, had been observed to take their departure by any train within the last hour. But the men shrugged their shoulders hopelessly. Ladies and maids and babies came and went in flocks, and no one noticed them. There were always babies. Yes, one of the men did remember a stout lady in a red shawl, with a baby and a bird-cage and a crowd of boxes, who had gone by the second-class. Is it that that was the lady monsieur was looking for, par hasard?

"She will go to her father," Mr. Granger said to himself again and again; and this for the moment seemed to him such a certainty, that he had half made up his mind to start for Spa by the next train that would carry him in that direction. But the thought of George Fairfax—the possibility that his wife might have had a companion in her flight—arrested him in the next moment. "Better that I should stop to make sure of his whereabouts," he thought; and drove straight to the Champs Elysées, where Mr. Fairfax had his bachelor quarters.

Here he saw the valet, who had not long returned from that diplomatic expedition to the neighborhood of the Rue de Morny, but who appeared the very image of unconsciousness and innocence notwithstanding. Mr. Fairfax was dining at home with some friends. Would Mr. Granger walk in? The dinner was not served yet. Mr. Fairfax would be delighted to see him.

Mr. Granger refused to go in; but told the man he should be glad to see Mr. Fairfax there, in the anteroom, for a moment. He wanted to be quite sure that the valet was not lying.

Mr. Fairfax came out, surprised at the visit.

"I had a special reason for wishing to know if you were at home this evening," said Daniel Granger. "I am sorry to have disturbed you, and will not detain you from your friends."

And then the question flashed upon him—Was she there? No; that would be too daring. Any other refuge she might seek; but surely not this.

George Fairfax had flung the door wide open in coming out. Mr. Granger saw the dainty bachelor room, with its bright pictures shining in the lamp-light, and two young men in evening dress lolling against the mantel-piece. The odors of an elaborate dinner were also perceptible. The valet had told the truth. Daniel Granger murmured some vague excuse, and departed.

"Queer!" muttered Mr. Fairfax as he went back to his friends. "I'm afraid the man is going off to his head; and yet he seemed cool enough to-day."

From the Champs Elysées Mr. Granger drove to the Rue du Chevalier Bayard. There was another possibility to be considered: if Austin, the painter, were indeed Austin Lovel, as George Fairfax had asserted, it was possible that Clarissa had gone to him; and the next thing to be done was to ascertain his whereabouts. The ancient porter, whom Mr. Granger had left the night before in a doubtful and bewildered state of mind, was eating some savory mess for his supper com-

fortably enough this evening, but started up in surprise, with his spectacles on his forehead, at Mr. Granger's reappearance.

"I want to know where your lodger, Mr. Austin, went when he left here?" Mr. Granger demanded, briefly.

The porter shrugged his shoulders.

"Alas! monsieur, that is an impossibility. I know nothing of Mr. Austin's destination; only that he went away yesterday, at three o'clock, in a hackney-coach, which was to take him to the Northern Railway."

"Is there no one who can tell me what I want to know?" asked Mr. Granger.

"I doubt it, monsieur. Monsieur Austin was in debt to almost every one except his landlord. He promised to write about his furniture—some of the movables in those rooms up stairs are his—cabinets, carved chairs, tapestries, and so on; but he said nothing as to where he was going."

"He promised to write," repeated Mr. Granger. "That's an indefinite kind of promise. You could let me know, I suppose, if you heard any thing?"

"But certainly," replied the porter, who saw Mr. Granger's fingers in his waistcoat pocket, and scented a fee, "monsieur should know immediately."

Mr. Granger wrote his address upon a card, and gave it to the porter, with napoleon.

"You shall have another when you bring me any information. Good-night."

At home, Daniel Granger had to face his daughter, who had heard by this time of her stepmother's departure and the abstraction of the baby.

"Oh, papa," she exclaimed, "I do so feel for you!" and made as if she would have embraced her parent; but he stood like a rock, not inviting any affectionate demonstration.

"Thank you, my dear," he said, gravely; "but I can do very well without pity. It's a kind of thing I'm not accustomed to. I am annoyed that Clarissa should have acted—in—in this ill-advised manner; but I have no doubt matters will come right in a little time."

"Love, my brother, is safe, papa?" inquired Sophia, clasping her hands.

"I have every reason to believe so. He is with his mother."

Miss Granger sighed profoundly, as much as to say, "He could not be in worse hands."

"And I think, my dear," continued her father, "that the less you trouble yourself about this business the better. Any interference on your part will only annoy me, and may occasion unpleasantness between us. You will go back to Arden tomorrow, as I intended, with Wurman, and one of the men to take care of your luggage. The rest of the establishment will follow in a day or so."

"And you, papa?"

"My plans are uncertain. I shall return to Arden as soon as I can."

"Dear old Arden!" exclaimed Sophia; "how I wish we had never left it! How happy I was for the first four years of my life there!"

This apostrophe Mr. Granger perfectly understood—it meant that, with the advent of Clarissa, happiness had fled away from Sophia's dwelling-place. He did not trouble himself to notice the speech; but it made him angry, nevertheless.

"There is a letter for you, papa," said Miss Granger, pointing to a side-table; "a letter which Wurman found up stairs."

The lynx-eyed Wurman, prying and peering about, had spied out Clarissa's letter to her husband, half hidden among the frivolities on the dressing-table. Mr. Granger pounced upon it eagerly, full of hope. It might tell him all he wanted to know.

It told him nothing. The words were not consistent with guilt, unless Clarissa were the very falsest of women. But had she not been the falsest? Had she not deceived him grossly, unpardonably? Alas! he was already trying to make excuses for her—trying to believe her innocent. Innocent of what society calls sin—yes, she might be that. But had he not seen her kneeling beside her lover? Had she not owned that she loved him? She had; and the memory of her words was poison to Daniel Granger.

CHAPTER XLIII.

UNDER THE SHADOW OF ST. GUDULE.

It was about half an hour before noon on the following day when Clarissa arrived at Brussels, and drove straight to her brother's lodging, which was in an obscure street under the shadow of St. Gudule. Austin was at work in a room opening straight from the staircase—a bare, shabby-looking chamber—and looked up from his easel with profound astonishment on beholding Mrs. Granger, with her maid and baby.

"Why, Clary, what, in the name of all that's wonderful, brings you to Brussels?" he exclaimed.

"I have come to live with you for a little while, Austin, if you will let me," she answered, quietly. "I have no other home now."

Austin Lovel laid down his palette, and came across the room to receive her.

"What does it all mean, Clary?—Look here, young woman," he said to Jane Target; "you'll find my wife in the next room; and she'll help you to make that youngster comfortable.—Now, Clary," lie went on, as the girl courtesied and vanished through the door that divided the two rooms, "what does it all mean?"

Clarissa told him her story—told it, that is to say, as well as she could tell a story which reflected so much discredit upon herself.

"I went to the Rue du Chevalier Bayard at 5 on Tuesday—as I promised, you know, Austin—and found Mr. Fairfax there. You may imagine how surprised I was when I heard you were gone. He did not tell me immediately; and he detained me there—talking to me."

The sudden crimson which mounted to her very temples at this juncture betrayed her secret.

"Talking to you!" cried Austin; "you mean making love to you! The infernal scoundrel!"

"It was—very dishonorable!"

"That's a mild way of putting it. What! he hung about my rooms when I had gone, to get you into a trap, as it were, at the risk of compromising you in a most serious manner! You never gave him any encouragement, did you, Clarissa?"

"I never meant to do so."

"You never meant! But a woman must know what she is doing. You used to meet him at my rooms very often. If I had dreamed there was any flirtation between you, I should have taken care to put a stop to that. Well, go on. You found Fairfax there, and you let him detain you, and then—?"

"My husband came, and there was a dreadful scene, and he knocked Mr. Fairfax down."

"Naturally. I respect him for doing it."

"And for a few minutes I thought he was dead," said Clarissa, with a shudder; and then she went on with her story, telling her brother how Daniel Granger had threatened to separate her from her child.

"That was hard lines," said Austin; "but I think you would have done better to remain passive. It's natural that he should take this business rather seriously at first; but that would wear off in a short time. What you have done will only widen the breach."

"I have got my child," said Clarissa.

"Yes; but in any case you must have had him. That threat of Granger's was only blank cartridge. He could not deprive you of the custody of your son."

"He will try to get a divorce, perhaps. He thinks me the vilest creature in the world."

"A divorce—bosh! Divorces are not obtained so easily. What a child you are, Clarissa!"

"At my rate, he was going to take me back to papa in disgrace. I could not have endured that. My father would think me guilty, perhaps."

Again the tell-tale crimson flushed Clarissa's face. The memory of that September evening at Mill Cottage flashed across her mind, and her father's denunciation of George Fairfax and his race.

"Your father would be wise enough to defend his child, I imagine," replied Austin, "although he is not a person whose conduct I would pretend to answer for. But this quarrel between you and your husband must be patched up, Clary."

"That will never be."

"It must be—for your son's sake, if not for yours. You pretend to love that boy, and are yet so blind to his interests? He is not the heir to an entailed estate, remember. Granger is a self-made man, and, if you offend him, may leave Arden Court to his daughter's children."

She had robust her son of his birthright, perhaps. For what? Because she did not have the strength to shut her heart against a guilty love; because, in the face of every good resolution she had ever made, she had been weak enough to listen when George Fairfax chose to speak.

"It seems very hard," she said, helplessly.

"It would be uncommonly hard upon that child, if this breach were not healed. But it must be healed."

"You do not know half the bitter things Mr. Granger said. Nothing would induce me to humiliate myself to him."

"Not the consideration of your son's interests?"

"God will protect my son; he will not be punished for any sin of his mother's."

"Come now, Clary, be reasonable. Let me write to Granger in my own proper character, telling him that you are here."

"If you do that, I will never forgive you. It would be most dishonorable, most unkind. You will not do that, Austin?"

"Of course I will not, if you insist upon it. But I consider that you are acting very foolishly. There must have been a settlement, by-the-way, when you married. Do you remember any thing about it?"

"Very little. There was five hundred a year settled on me for pin-money; and five hundred a year for papa, settled somehow—the reversion to come to me, I think they said. And—yes, I remember—if I had any children, the eldest son was to inherit Arden Court."

"That's lucky! I thought your father would never be such a fool as to let you marry without some arrangement of that sort."

"Then my darling is safe, is he not?"

"Well, yes, I suppose so."

"And you will not betray me, Austin?" said Clarissa, imploringly.

"Betray you! If you put it in that way, of course not. But I should be acting more in your interests if I wrote to Granger. No good can come of the step you have taken. However, we must trust to the chapter of accidents," added Austin, with a resumption of his habitual carelessness.

"I needn't tell you that you are heartily welcome to my hospitality, such as it is. Our quarters are rough enough, but Bessie will do what she can to make you comfortable; and I'll put on a spurt and work extra hard to keep things together. I have found a dealer in the Montagne de la Cour who is willing to take my sketches at a decent price. Look here, Clary, how do you like this little bit of *genre*? 'Forbidden Fruit'—a chubby, six-year-old girl, on tiptoe, trying to fetch a peach growing high on the wall; hims child, and pre-Raphaelite wall. Peach, carnation velvet; child's cheek to match the peach. Rather a nice thing, isn't it?" asked Austin, lightly.

Clarissa made some faint attempt to appear interested in the picture, which she only saw in a dim, far-off way.

"I shall be very glad to see where you are going to put baby," she said, anxiously.

The bleak and barren aspect of the painting-

room did not promise much for the accommodation or comfort of Mr. Lovel's domicile.

"Where I am going to put baby! Ah, to be sure, you will want a room to sleep in," said Austin, as if this necessity had only just struck him. "We'll soon manage that; the house is roomy enough—a perfect barrack, in fact. There was a lace-factory carried on in it once, I believe. I dare say there's a room on this floor that we can have. I'll go and see about that, while you make yourself comfortable with Bessie. We have only two rooms—this and the next, which is our bedroom; but we shall do something better by-and-by, if I find my pictures sell pretty fast."

He went off whistling an opera air, and by no means oppressed by the idea that he had a sister in difficulties east upon his hands.

There was a room—a darksome chamber at the back of the house—looking into a narrow alley, where domestic operations of some kind seemed to be going on in every window and door-way, but sufficiently spacious, and with two beds. It was altogether homely, but looked tolerably clean; and Clarissa was satisfied with it, although it was the poorest room that had ever sheltered her. She had her baby—that was the grand point; and he rolled upon the beds, and crowded and chattered, in his half-inarticulate way, with much delight as if the shabby chamber had been an apartment in a palace.

"If he is happy, I am more than content!" exclaimed Mrs. Granger.

A fire was lighted in the stove, and Bessie brought them a second breakfast of coffee and rolls, and a great basin of bread and milk for young Lovel. The little man ate ravenously, and did not cry for Brobson—seemed, indeed, rather relieved to have escaped from the jurisdiction of that respectable matron. He was fond of Jane Target, who was just one of those plump, apple-cheeked young women whom children love instinctively, and who had a genius for singing ballads of a narrative character, every verse embellished with a curious, old-fashioned, quavering turn.

After this refreshment—the first that Clarissa had taken with any approach to appetite since that luckless scene in her brother's painting-room—Jane persuaded her mistress to lie down and rest, which she did, falling asleep peacefully, with her boy's bright young head nestling beside her on the pillow. It was nearly dark when she awoke; and after dinner she went out for a walk with Austin in the bright, gas-lit streets, and along a wide boulevard, where the tall, bare trees looked grim in the darkness. The freedom of this new life seemed strange to her, after the forms and ceremonies of her position as Daniel Granger's wife—and Sophia Granger's step-mother—strange, and not at all unpleasant.

"I think I could be very happy with you and Bessie always, Austin," she said, "if they would only leave me in peace."

"Could you, Clary? I'm sure I should be very glad to have you; but it would be rather hard upon Granger."

"He was going to take me back to papa; he wanted to get rid of me."

"He was in a passion when he talked about that, rely upon it."

"He was as cold as ice, Austin. I don't believe he was ever in a passion in his life."

(TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEEK.)

GRUMBLERS.

GRUMBLING is a disease which, once caught, is seldom got rid of again; a habit that sticks like a bur and grows like a mushroom; a Nessus garment, which, when put on, can be taken off and hung up in the wardrobe at pleasure, but which clings to the devoted flesh with immovable tenacity, and resists every effort from the outside to tear it away. Nothing but the most resolute will can conquer that habit when formed; but resolute will, though strong enough when dealing with other folks' weaknesses and tempers, is wonderfully incapable when acting as a curb on one's self. And when the question comes of doing any thing disagreeable to flesh or blood for the good of one's soul, resolution is apt to melt away from marble to mud.

Yet, if the grumbler only knew how disagreeable he makes himself! It is to be presumed that we all like to be loved, save those few eccentric people who boast of their ability to live without the sympathy or charity of their kind. But, taking mankind *en masse*, and making no abnormal exceptions, we all desire the esteem and good feeling of our fellows, and most of us descend even to underhand meanness to insure consideration. But the grumbler, without intending it, makes all who come in contact with him so uncomfortable that they only long to escape him; and he wears even the stoutest affection by time. So far from seeing that any cloud of his has a silver lining, to his way of looking at things the brightest silver throws a sable shadow; and instead of the longest lane having a turning at last, the shortest that he may have to traverse is as if endless. Whatever good things he has are overtaken by their corresponding disadvantages, and his lean kine eat up his fat ones at a sitting. If you praise his children, he points out to you their faults; if you tell him his garden is pretty, he laments the trouble and expense of keeping it up; if you envy him the sunny aspect of his flower-clad house, he counts up to you the cost of the faded carpets and curtains which a southern aspect involves, and sighs over earwigs in his tea and greenfly on his roses. Whatever you see in his surroundings to admire or approve, he is sure to expose to you the defects; and if he has to choose between admiring a flower or lamenting a weed, the weed will come in for the lamentation and the flower will go unregarded.

MÉRYON, AND MÉRYON'S PARIS.: I

Wedmore, Frederick

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MÉRYON, AND MÉRYON'S PARIS.

BY FREDERICK WEDMORE

I

HALF a century ago a London physician—suave, immaculate, irreproachable—met, followed, and captured a Paris dancing-girl ; and the offspring of their loves, such as they were, was the great artist, Méryon. The offspring of their loves being that great artist, with a spirit at once the most original, imaginative, and persistent, a hand at once the most delicate and the strongest, one is curious to know whether the germ of some fine quality of his, in passion or skill, cannot have been inherited—whether that unlicensed connection which gave him birth had at least some heart in it, or

whether it was but the vulgar and shabby intrigue of green room and *cabinet*.

The truest, the most trustworthy story we are likely to get, answers that question not quite in the darkest way. Méryon was one of two children, and the other, a girl, was taken to England by her father, the physician, and there, in spite of the disadvantages and difficulties of her birth, there was made for her what the teller of the story describes to me as ‘a brilliant marriage.’ She took her place in the world. Méryon himself—Charles Méryon—remained with his mother, whom after some years the father seems to have entirely quitted ; the cause of it, again I hear, the offend-

siveness of the children's grandmother. The vulgarity of the old, of the frowsy, of the unattractive, is a vulgarity one cannot endure ; and the woman who allowed to Méryon's mother the life she led—nay, who urged her, it is said, to a worse—is not likely to have brightened for the physician the narrow Paris home into which this and that intolerable relative of the dancer he had lived with would be prone to insinuate herself unbidden and undesired. The physician went his way, taking, as I have said, the daughter with him, and leaving the son to the mother, and making her some not inconsiderable gift of money, perhaps even for some years a stated and sufficient allowance. At all events, in Méryon's childhood and boyhood the means of living did not seem to be lacking. He was destined for the navy, and entered it at the right moment, leaving it to be an artist when still a young man and a lieutenant. Méryon had owed to his father some material provision for his life. To his mother—the sensitiveness, fineness, and passion of whose nature he believed he had inherited—he owed the hourly cares and thoughts for him that were much of her existence. Her life went out in obscurity—under the cloud of illicit ways, in the fettered freedom of a *demi-monde*—when he was a youth ; and perhaps the most impulsive and resolute, imaginative and nervous, of all the youth of Paris was left surrounded at the best, as regards kindred, by a vulgar entourage of *pochard* and *canaille*, in a strange loneliness.

His nature had the combined gentleness and fire of a man of genius ; the fire ready to flare out when work was to be done or opposition to be encountered ; the gentleness to be bestowed in the rare moments of sympathetic friendship. The people who knew him in his later time, artists, critics, kind-hearted connoisseurs, fellow-workers, companions, say that he had the charm of genius. He was pleasant to be with. His obstinacy, however, was from the first as indomitable as his activity at the last was nervous and unhealthy. In the Peninsula of Banks, New Zealand, during his long voyage round the world, he and his comrades were forbidden to make use of the captain's little boat, and their pride was touched by the restraint.

Méryon himself would make a boat, he said. A tree was hewn for the purpose, a tent set up for Méryon near the shore, but within range of wild beasts. There for three months young Méryon worked, his food brought to him by his fellows, his hands raw with the persistency of his labor. The boat once launched, the captain was moved to admiration. It should be set up at home, he declared, in the naval arsenal of Toulon. Somewhere or other there it must now be.

The artistic instinct of Méryon made naval life distasteful. Abandoning the navy, and finding that there were substantial obstacles to his becoming a painter, he determined to be an engraver, and entering after a while the *atelier* of M. Bléry, he left it in 1850, at the age of twenty-nine, to take humble chambers in the Rue St. Etienne du Mont, and to live if possible by the steady pursuit of his art. Those were the days of the beginning of our modern practice of the art of etching. Bracquemond, Flameng, Jacquemart, were young. The two first, at least, lived somewhat in the society of Méryon. Bracquemond etched two portraits of him ; in one he is sitting in a chair, in the other he is as a face carved in bas-relief in marble. 'Messire Bracquemond,' wrote Méryon, in the quaint verses he even then affected, and which subsequently he was wont to set under certain of his prints—

Messire Bracquemond
A peint en cette image
Le sombre Méryon
Au grotesque visage.

The French critic, M. Burty, availing himself of the publicity of the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, in 1863, gave a catalogue of Méryon's work, which for practical purposes was sufficient.* No classification was attempted by this chronicler ; but at least one broad division requires to be made. For it was when Méryon after years of absence, had returned for the first time a man to the city of his birth, and while he was employed for money's sake in much insignificant and mechanical labor of copying, which

* No one has done as much as M. Burty to spread the knowledge of Méryon, and I am indebted to him for more than one of the particulars contained in this notice.

even an original engraver, until great fame has reached him, can hardly escape—it was at this time, and in the midst of work which served only its purpose of the hour and day, that Méryon had that vision of Paris, the ultimate realisation of which, with passion and with patience, lifted him into the rank of the greatest artists that can be.

Méryon's work, then, may be broadly divided into two classes : first, the work done mainly in his earliest time, after drawings of many subjects by old French and other artists—Renier Zeeman, the Dutchman, was one of them ;—and second, the sometimes partly original, but oftener wholly original work, in which best of all he recorded those characteristics of the Paris of his own day, and yet of the Middle Age, which were passing away under the improving hands of the Second Empire, in its first years. There are also the New Zealand views, among the earliest of all his works, and the insignificant or bizarre fancies of his latter days, when his mind declined ; but the work of artistic interest is that in which he recorded Old Paris, and he did this well in the etchings which were copies of old drawings which his art and feeling had made into finer pictures, and supremely well in the etchings which were wholly original.

Fancy him, then, established in a lonely way, and yet of course with some artistic comrades within reach, in the cabin-like rooms of the humblest floor of the street, the north side of which is occupied by the church that gives that street its name—St. Etienne du Mont—and which Méryon made the subject of one of the most harmonious and mysterious of his works. I went one evening this last spring to see the church and street : the street itself will have historic interest as that from which so many of Méryon's finest etchings are dated; but I went chiefly to see, in a way in which hardly any other of the subjects of his pictures would allow one to see, how much or little of voluntary artistic composition entered into his work of record. Not much here, as far as concerns the mere lines of his plate, though the light and shade on the St. Etienne were his own. The Gothic college to the left had disappeared—was threatening no doubt to disappear when he executed his print.

But the church itself which remained—that his record had been absolutely and delicately faithful, both the building and its position, half behind the massive angle of the Panthéon. The humble rooms he lived in, on that side of the church not seen in the picture, must have looked upon the church's bare south wall. The quarter, in any journey from reputable parts of Paris, would be reached by passage from richer street to poorer, and so to poorer again. A lost quarter, even behind and beyond the shabbiest of the quarters of students ; around it, in strange lanes, the dwellings of the *chiffonniers*, the rag-gatherers who with basket on back cluster towards it at midnight from nightly search among offal and gutter, and wander out from it once more when evening has come again, to spread themselves over the town. Beyond it an undiscovered country, known only to the police and to the workers in strange trades plied in remote places. There Méryon lived.

That old-world quarter of Paris—a lost quarter, a quarter seemingly deserted, yet thickly peopled all the while—was favorable to Méryon's art, to the growth of his imagination, to the strength and endurance of the impression which the mysterious and crowded city made on him in these the first years of his living there in manhood. He began his study of Paris, observing consciously the quaint combinations of window and house-roof, the chimneys, the *tourelles* in quiet back streets, narrow blind lanes where the Middle Age lingered, and perhaps not less consciously taking note of that moral aspect of Paris which was to color his work and to bring into strange and new juxtaposition elements of beauty and horror the fascination of whose union he was almost the first to appreciate. A high literary genius, Victor Hugo, had blended beauty and horror in his great romance, *Notre Dame de Paris*, which Paris had inspired. But in pictorial art Méryon was to be alone, and the Paris that he pictured was pictured in a way only too much his own—only too much above and beyond the valuing of those to whom he first submitted his work.

I went this year into the shop of a little-known dealer, and asked for Méryon's etchings. 'Views of Paris?' he

answered, and knew what I meant ; but knew no better than did the print-sellers of the artist's own lifetime how entirely these things were pictures, how much they were visions. Well, with little encouragement, Méryon did his work—none the less priceless as a record because it bore on it too the mark of his own sentiment—did the etching of St. Etienne of the Tour de l'Horloge, of the Cathedral of Notre-Dame seen from behind and from over the water, from places now strangely changed ; did the etching of the thick and speechless uncommunicative walls of the *Rue des Mauvais Garçons* (Baudelaire's favorite), and 'The Doric little Morgue,' the quay alive with the bustle and excitement of an instant of horrible arrival. He did these things, and took them to the dealers. One refused, and another. Wrapping up his port-folio he went on again—tramped, lonely and unencouraged, round the Paris he was beginning to hate.

Disappointment and neglect told soon upon the delicate organisation of the artist. Whimsical he had always been ; exaggerated in his hates and loves and in the very efforts of his will ; and now some years of poverty and isolation—some years of the production, amidst complete indifference, of immense and immortal work—began to thrust into prominence those traits in his character which could not be noticed without suspicion and fear. He fell violently in love with some little girl of the humble and uneducated class—a *fillette de crémerie*, a bright young woman, who stood, I suppose, behind the counter of the shop at which he got his morning meal. The charm of the man in his pleasant hours, his genius, his spirit, the prodigious skill of his hand, were less apparent to the Parisian shop-girl than the surprises of his wayward temper, his exaltation, his not unfrequent gloom. It was no use, his passion and beseeching—*elle ne voulait pas de lui*. She stood aloof, and he at last went on his way, embittered and saddened. The hardness of his living, the neglect of his art, the deprivation even of personal pleasure, of the excitement of love—these things curdled in his brain, and hallucinations crowded round him.

He had one constant and most kind patron and encourager—Monsieur Niel,

librarian at the Ministry of the Interior, who had tried, and not always without success, to get him commissions, and who was forming even then by purchase, when the prints had no recognised value, what was destined to be the earliest of the great collections of Méryon's work. Meeting this gentleman one day, Méryon looked aside with a frown and an expression of injury and grievance. He would have nothing to say to M. Niel. 'Voyous,' said M. Niel ; 'what is it then, Méryon ?' 'You rob me,' was the answer, 'and make a profit by my work.' Another day, a critic, who among the earliest had recognised the genius of Méryon to create and interpret—to throw his spirit and the very spirit of Paris into his record of the semblance of its stones—met him in similar mood. 'The money that you owe me,' said Méryon, when he was forced to speak. But there was no money owed between them at all.

And so the artist, sufficiently neglected indeed from without, came to carry within him his most implacable enemies. In his imagination, they lingered in wait behind the corners of the streets—would be down upon him to distress and thwart him if he paused long or was heedless of who approached. And so with nervous and frightened eye, but with hand still keenly obedient and splendidly controlled, he stood on some empty space of quay, sketching, as his wont had been, with the finest of pencil points, the angles of house and church, bits of window, roof and chimney, to be afterwards pieced carefully together and used in the etching of the plate. The strokes drawn by his pencil were often drawn upwards instead of downwards. Often the sketches were discarded : the point of view had not been the right one. Thus I have seen a drawing of the Pompe Notre-Dame, taken from under a bridge whose arch, as an element in the picture, prominent in the foreground, he afterwards removed. There is a drawing, too, for the right side of his *Abside de Notre-Dame*, in which the line of varied house-roofs is higher than in the plate. He saw subsequently that the houses must be lower, smaller, and more distant, to give the sense of height and domination and an almost lonely grandeur to the structure of the cathe-

dral that rises dark and solemn against the evening sky. These things, by which a perfect composition was generally attained, he saw of course during those best days—the years of 1850 to 1854—in which he was doing the masterpieces of his work. Later, the skill of the hand was guided by no keen judgment nor sane imagination: at last the plates, or some of them, in their latest states, were disfigured by imaging the fancies of a mind rebellious or vanished.

Presently—it was at a time when he had done his finest work, but had not as yet drifted into madness—Méryon removed for a while to Brussels: a commission, obtained at the instance of M. Niel, awaiting him from the Duc d'Aremberg. Soon he came back. It was in the beginning of 1858, and he installed himself in the Rue des Fossés-Saint-Jacques. There his illness more completely declared itself. Discouraged, overwhelmed with his failure, he gave up life: the common mechanical activities of life: the trouble of dressing, undressing, eating—down even to these small things, his energy was gone. He could not be roused from his bed. His friends at that time, recognising that his career was in the past—believing that almost on any day they might hear that he was dead or in the madhouse—brought one night the artist Flameng to his bedside, and Flameng made there a drawing of him, of which a reproduction has since been published. That night, or a day or two afterwards, he became dangerous, and they took him away to Charenton in a cab.

The order, the care, of the great *maison de santé* rapidly influenced him, and after some period of probation, during which he did some copyist's work in his art, he was discharged. In his new lodging of the Rue Duperré he retouched his copiers. Arrangements were made for the publication of one or two of them in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* and *Fine Arts Quarterly Review*; others, retouched, were printed anew by Delâtre—those especially that had not before been printed by this printer of exceptional and unequalled skill. But no success of a substantial kind came to Méryon's work in Méryon's life. His days were more and more agitated; the sense of failure preyed on him, though it was not to that

that he attributed his illness. 'I became mad,' said Méryon, 'the day I was going to sea, when I was a boy and they told me of my birth. The shock of it made me mad.' That was very probably a fancy. In 1867 he returned to Charenton, there thinking himself no longer Méryon, but some saintly character of some far-off time; and there, next year, obstinately refusing sustenance, because he said there was not food enough in the world, and he was getting more than his share—there, on February 13, 1868, he died. '*Sa barque*,' as an old comrade of his on the high seas said finely at his grave—'*sa barque, à tout instant noyée, courrait sans repos au naufrage.*'

Long afterwards, one curious and careful to know about his life went to Charenton for particulars—Charenton, outside Paris; the gaunt white house in the bareish land. Did the doctor remember Méryon? 'Méryon—Méryon? No. Let us see, however.' And he consulted a book. 'Méryon? Oh, yes. Number six hundred and forty-three. See here—a man who at the last was writing incoherent memorials. I will show you.' And, ringing the bell, 'Send down here the portfolios of No. 643.'

The immense artist—number six hundred and forty-three!

II.

What was the artist's work?

The original work of Méryon was called into being, so to say, by the destruction of Old Paris, which he looked upon not so much with an antiquarian as with an artistic and personal regret. Had Méryon been genuinely antiquarian, he would have sketched details of architecture with a colder correctness, but with less of living force. As it was, he loved architecture, and knew it more widely than any artist before. The great strength of his draughtsmanship lay indeed in its representation, and all the styles he represented he represented with equal power; but in the under-current of his work there is the mood of passion of an individual mind. Therefore his work combines, and will combine still more in the future (when the actual remembrance of the things it commemorates shall have passed away), a certain antiquarian interest, dear to some, and

valuable no doubt to all, with that much higher interest of work of an intense personality—work which no one could do before, and which no one has done since. Likely enough, no other circumstance than the passing away of that old vesture of the city which he loved would have roused him to the complete expression of himself in art. His dull panoramas of the New Zealand shores are adroit, but hardly personal. Some skill to speak in his art had begun to come before the substance to be spoken. Afterwards he failed as a painter : some attempts at painting, during the early Paris years, having proved to him not only the presence of manual and technical difficulties long to overcome, but a defective vision for color, so that green was seen by him as red. The defectiveness of vision for color had its compensation in an absolutely exceptional sensitiveness to tone and gradation. Etching was his art ; and in the etching of Paris this mysterious and brooding spirit, whose care was for the past and the familiar—never the new—found his particular work. His sympathetic interest in his every subject, in the place, in the association, in the spirit of the scene, as well as in the lines and lights which he followed with so infinite a subtlety, divides his chronicle of Paris utterly from all others that artists have made of cities—gives it a unity, lacking, say, to that diligent and not unpicturesque record which Wenceslaus Hollar made of the London of the Commonwealth. And so it is that his work has a personal stamp and charm, of his own imagination enriching the bare walls and tottering houses—a charm recalling by that imaginative quality the literary work of Victor Hugo in *Notre Dame de Paris*, and of the great English master in *The Tale of Two Cities* and in *Barnaby Rudge*. And that imaginative, that personal quality, joined to manual dexterity likewise unsurpassed, makes his etched work the greatest and most profoundly personal of any (save Turner's own) produced since Rembrandt's.

Putting aside the drier and less artistic among the copies of other men's work, and two or three topographical records wholly his own—such as the *Ministère de la Marine*, the *Petite Pompe*, the *Bain Froid Chevrier*—Méryon executed dur-

ing his four great years a dozen plates, or at most a dozen and a half, which in their *ensemble* guarantee his fame. A quite limited number of impressions having been taken in the course of successive years, Méryon himself at last destroyed the plates—ploughed deep burin lines across them, in a moment of despair, as Mr. Hamerton picturesquely informs us. I thank Heaven he did. For the truth is, if that was madness, there was much method in it. The plates were used up hopelessly ; and though no doubt they might have been again retouched, steeled, and so reproduced by the thousand in the poorest of their forms, the artist in destroying them did in the main but protect us from the eventual outpouring, in the interests of the shop, of masses of misleading impressions, libels upon his art. His works are rare—the best of them, in the best states, very rare ; but there are enough of them, as there are enough of Rembrandts and of the *Liber* prints of Turner, to be seen by those anxious to see, and not too many to be cherished and held as precious things. Etchings are works of highest art only on the condition that the impressions submitted are of finest quality. The sharpness of the lines, the clearness of the lights, the richness of the transfer from copper to paper—these things, in their proper combination, are only possible while the plate remains flawless. And though impressions from Méryon's plates must now always be rare, the plates were not destroyed too soon. As it is, the prints differ extremely in quality.

The British Museum and two or three private collections are in possession of examples of his entire work. Isolated pieces, or a few carefully gathered, are to be seen more frequently among the lovers of art. Pieces here and there occur at sales ; here and there in the portfolios of dealers. But for the public to be properly acquainted with them as a series, as a whole, as the work of a life, there is needed an exhibition of them in their choicest states and best impressions, and this is an exhibition which a society such as the Burlington Fine Arts Club would do itself honor by undertaking.

For, though a single piece may show well enough both manual skill and a sense

of beauty which shall be a surprise to the stranger, it is only by a knowledge of the whole, or at all events of several pieces carefully gathered, that the personal sentiment can be known and valued—that it can be felt how much more is in the artist's thought and work than the mere stones of the building he is recording, the mere water whose steady flow under dark bridges he has painted, so to say, as no one else; how he was possessed of a sense of the restless, eager, almost tragical activity of the existence around him; how the character, the life, the mysteries, the fortunes of Paris—the Paris unfrequented of the tourist and the prosperous—are depicted on his plates. For what one print suggests, another print confirms. The *Rue des Mauvais Garçons*, with its gaunt house lines, its barred windows, its darkly shadowed portal, and deserted ways—its narrow pavement, along which two lonely figures hurry, and 'gather garments round them, pass, not pry'—has its companion in the *Morgue*, where, before the tender and delicate lines of the Doric building now destroyed, and before the many-storied houses with windows indifferent or listening, the weird figures of Méryon's pencil gaze idly or rush with terror: here, a cruel crowd assembled heartless, the unmoved witnesses of the terrible arrival; there one woman in the agony of dread or discovery, knowing or surmising whose is the body borne with dropped and heavy head, with wet limbs, from the river. These things are conveyed with the strangest and most fascinating and most impressive union—Méryon's alone—of a realistic art that recoils from nothing of terrible, of shabby, of loathsome, provided it be actual, true, and of our day, with an imaginative art—an art of suggestion, almost of fantasy—that speaks to the mind by symbols, by hints of profound significance yet ever varying interpretations—an art in this one sense akin to that of the *Melancholia* and *The Knight of Death*. And above these scenes, so depicted that the realism which at first you looked for over all is arrested and elevated by imagination, or the imagination which at first you wanted over all is disturbed by the healthy shock of realism—above these scenes, these and so many others so depicted, there broods

with satisfaction Méryon's *Stryge*—the horned and winged demon, an incarnation of all evil and disastrous things, which the Gothic imagination set among the carved stones of Notre Dame, and which the genius of Méryon understood and interpreted, as it looked down from its lonely heights upon the life of the city. Here and elsewhere Méryon recorded strong things, terrible things, beautiful things, but never his sense of this or that object—building, church, or bridge—for its own sake alone. He recorded in them his imagination of Paris—his sense of various fortunes and many lives. He did this with the truth of fact, and the truth of poetic fiction.

The imaginative power never, except at will, weakened his grasp of the actualities he wanted to portray. I have spoken already of architecture, of the equal force in seizing and recording the characteristics of styles various or opposed, the solemnity of the Gothic cathedral, the lightness and simplicity of the *Morgue*, the elaborate luxuriance of the Renaissance waxing weightier to the days of Louis Quatorze—witness the church (St. Etienne itself) in the background of the *St. Etienne du Mont*. But he had not only the sense of the picturesque and the characteristic; he had the sense of construction. Take the *Pompe*—the engine-house by the river—and its scaffolding, beam crossed by beam. Here his pleasure in constructive work, however humble, is shown by his close and careful following of the woodwork to its darkest and furthest recesses. His fame would be assured if it rested only on his rendering of the labor of men's hands, from the fretted roof of the cathedral and its stately towers to the intricate timbers of the engine-house, or the rough boarding quickly round spots marked for destruction and repair.*

But while specially heedful of the streets and bridges, quays and houses, amid which the weird figures of his drama passed in playing their part, Méryon looked with no careless eyes on all

* Mr. Hamerton, who is generally, and with wisdom, loud in his praise, has blamed Méryon for a 'puerile imitation' of the grain of wood in the *Rue de la Tixranderie*. He erred in good company—with Dürer and Lucas of Leyden. (See the St. Jerome of Dürer, and an Entombment of Lucas of Leyden.)

of Nature that was visible in Paris—on water and sky. The *Pont au Change*—both the large original etching and the exquisite interpretation of Nicolle's old design—the *Pont Neuf*, the great *Abside* itself with its foreground of Seine stream, will show us that no one like Méryon has depicted running water, now shallow, now deep, never mirror-like, never gathered into waves, but rippling pleasantly against the angles of the bridge piers, or flowing moody and sullen under its darkest arches ; now in happy sunlight ; now in profound and blackened shadow, suggestive of the suicidal plunge and the slime of the river-bed ; now again in the half lights, the delicate semi-tones more beautiful and difficult. Here, at least, there is success undisputed, and in etched work quite unequalled, save in our own day once and once only by the broad ripple of the Thames in *Agamemnon*, and save, in the great days, by the tranquil waters of Rembrandt, which reflect the pleasant lines of house and tree in *Cottage and Dutch Haybarn*, and of streamside, fence, and herbage in *Cottage with white Palings*.

The great etchers have been very chary of their treatment of skies, and Méryon, in adventuring sometimes a little further, could not hope to fare better than they. He would only have copied Rembrandt had he left, for the most part, his skies a blank ; the master found that that simple proceeding, if properly combined with a subtle toning of the landscape, best suggested the open sky of open country—the stillness and the spaciousness he loved. Therefore he departed from it scarcely more than twice : once in the rainstorm of the *Three Trees*, once in depicting in a rare small landscape the limited light of dawn. But Méryon's skies were not the skies of open country, no vast spaces of unbroken air, of light uncrossed by shadows, but mostly fragments of sky seen from between towering street-lines—the grey, obscured, and lower sky of cities ; now and again, as in the *Abside*, larger tracts, here charged with brooding clouds, with birds flying low—the 'solemn, admonishing skies' of a mind constant to its own imaginations. In the *Abside*, with its rolling cloud, his sky is at its best ; so it is in the etching of the *Pont au Change vers 1784* (after Nicolle), and in the shrouded

air of the *Pont Neuf*. But elsewhere his lines are now and then hard ; his dots now and then mechanical in effect, though never without meaning. He saw skies as a poetical artist is bound to see them, but his hand, in rendering them, was not always of equal sureness. The conditions of etching—the employment of pure lines—fettered him, and what if he did fail sometimes, where Claude himself, the artist of the sunset—the triumphant craftsman of the plate, Dumesnil No. 15—failed often.

But indeed his distant skies are often of marvellous poetry, and the atmosphere between us and those furthest skies is of singular fidelity. Méryon felt the air, now keen and clear, now misty ; now in the pleasantest places of brilliant Paris, sunny as Van der Heyden's or De Hooch's ; now thick and blackish grey, as it hangs sluggishly under damp dark arch or over the slime of the bank of the river. Lastly, the figures of Méryon. Here, as nowhere else, reality and fantasy were allowed to join. They are small always—little passing masses of light, shade, and movement to relieve, to indicate, to suggest. They make no claim to accuracy of draughtsmanship. But they are always interesting, fascinating, and alive, always in strange accord with the dominant note of the subject, whether they are found in grace of quietness or energy of action. Thus the tall and tranquil elegance of the standing figure in the *Abside*, almost sculpturesque in the simplicity of its grace, and that of the figure leaning against the doorway in the *Rue de la Tixeranderie*, fits the sentiment no less than it suits the composition, and is Méryon's and no other's. Under the arch of *Le Pont Notre-Dame*, a woman's figure, standing, brooding nobly, is set well against the weird activity of the figure springing downwards by the rope. It is a page out of Eugène Sue and the *Mysteries of Paris*. Under the shadow of the College of Montaigu, now departed, sisters of charity hie on their errand ; on the church steps a beggar will not be denied. Before the Morgue there gather, as we have said already, its eager seekers and its cruel crowd—a dramatic scene immensely emphasised. Somewhere else, there is a boat on dark water, with strange significant dredging. And below the place

where the sunlight Méryon painted so well strikes on the turrets of the Pont Neuf, figures point with eager gesture to the shadowed and blackened water, and in the boat a group of three form or suggest, like the willows in *Childe Roland*, 'a suicidal throng.' For no ghost would have been needed to beckon Méryon to 'more removed ground,' for such 'impartment' as it might desire 'to him alone.' Spirits spoke to him, only too well, in every street of Paris. The stones were

alive. And in every building of beauty or age, at every dark street corner, in every bridge that spanned the breadth of Seine, in every aspect of wandering water or passing sky, there was something to recall to him the fortunes of the solitary, of the disappointed, of the desperate, of the poor. His sense of these strange 'fortunes—of their 'mystery and tragedy—he has woven inseparably into the fabric of his work.*—*The Nineteenth Century.*

MRS MELLOR'S DIAMONDS

Sala, George Augustus

The Albion, A Journal of News, Politics and Literature (1822-1876); Jun 24, 1871; 49, 25; ProQuest

pg. 390

attention to business as he did to pleasure. At the commencement of his career he was—notwithstanding a magnificent handwriting and ability to pronounce his *h's* correctly—profoundly illiterate, but, like many other young men of the nineteenth century (seventh decade), he had educated himself to a very fair intellectual status. He had taught himself French and German out of Ollendorff; had always utilised his annual holidays in continental trips; had made careful epitomes of Adam Smith, Ricardo, and Mill; and "Chambers' Educational Course" and the "Penny Cyclopaedia" had done the rest. He read the morning and evening newspapers very carefully, and could hold his own in any society. He went to the theatre very frequently, and could talk about Shakespeare and about burlesques. He had taken surreptitious lessons from an instructress who taught adults to dance in twelve lessons, and a three-guinea course at a Brompton riding-school had enabled him to bestride a lively-stable hack in Rottemore without tumbling off. He had even been seen driving a mail phaeton in Piccadilly very creditably. Whatever he had learned the chariooteer's accomplishment I must confess that I do not know, but techniques have their intuitions, and there are some men who do excellently well that which they have never been taught to do.

Up to the age of thirty Surbiton P. Mellor had remained a gay young bachelor, occupying, since his prosperity had become a substantial fact, an elegant suite of chambers in Parliament-street, Westminster. In process of time it occurred to him that his position demanded that he should take a house, that the house in question should be elegantly and expensively furnished, and that a wife would be a very excellent adjunct to the mansion and to the *amendement* in question. The house was soon found, and a handsome sum paid for a long lease, with the faculty of purchasing the freehold when convenient. Nor was there much difficulty in securing a wife as elegant and as expensive as the furniture of her destined home. There is a curious section of society in London which seems to bear a close affinity to first class upholstery, first-class millinery and dressmaking, first-class china, glass, and table linen, and *dîners à la Russe* sent in from the pastry-cook's. In this society are to be found numbers of young ladies—comely, healthy, virtuous, accomplished, well-dressed, well-groomed,—whom you have only to pick out, choose, and agree with the manufacturer as to the terms of purchase, and the article will be sent home with the promptitude and despatch expected in the delivery of a new brougham or a grand piano-forte. There is the demand, and there is the supply to meet it. The article is superfine and fitted with the newest improvements. Nothing is lacking—a big church-service, a handsome trousseau, bridesmaids, brothers, sisters, a father and mother-in-law, and a distant relative in India, from whom the article has expectations. With any appreciable amount of ready money the article bride is perhaps not always provided; but vast numbers of the Surbiton Mellors of the nineteenth century are perfectly well contented with the money they have themselves made or are making, and will endure the penitlessness of their spouses if they are pretty. The manager of the Primrose Hill Branch Bank, being bidden to a dinner, to be followed by a carpet-dance, at Mr. Harpie Wyndford's residence, Wimbledon Common, did there and then fix his eyes and affections upon Miss Maude Fenton, youngest (and seventh) daughter of Captain Fenton, half-pay R. N. The young people being properly introduced, it became transparently obvious to everybody in the particular circle of society in which they moved that Surbiton Mellor intended to propose to Miss Fenton as soon as ever he could in common decency pop the question. The girl was as fully aware of this as her mother and her feminine cronies were. The wedding breakfast and the wedding outfit might, with scarcely any deviation from propriety, have been ordered within a fortnight after that dinner and carpet-dance at Wimbledon. Through a proper respect for *les convenances*, the courtship was spread over two or three months, but during that period Surbiton Mellor was very philosophically occupied in furnishing and decorating his new house in Occidental Grove, and in looking after the building of his new brougham; while Miss, on her part, you may be sure, did not lose her time. Young ladies who have been well brought up have an immensity of things to do before they are married. There are old letters to burn, old scores to be settled, old "foolish nonsenses" to be stilled—for ever.

It was a *mariage de raison*, if you will, this union between the prosperous bank manager and the pretty, penniless, half-pint captain's daughter. For my part, I am content to maintain that it was a marriage of the nineteenth century (seventh decade), and not of a three-volume novel. Perhaps out of ten weddings which take place at St. George's, Hanover-square, not more than one has had the slightest tinge of romance in its preliminary courtship, and perhaps nine out of the alliances turn out well, and the tenth—the romantic one—turns up some day in Lord Penzance's dolorous court. For sound, earnest, and intense matrimonial hatred, command me, as a rule, to the parties in a love-match. Nor be so foolish as to assume that reason and calmness—and a little prudence may be—are qualities at all incompatible with conjugal love—the well-ordered respectable love which suffices to cause a young man and woman to pass thirty or forty years of married life without open scandal and without secret explosions, to rear up a numerous family, and to go down at last to the grave esteemed by all their relatives and friends. Surbiton Mellor nurtured naturally sanguine hopes that such would be his matrimonial course. There was no skeleton in his closet, he was no Barnes Newcome; he had never compromised himself, he owed no more debts of love than he did debts of money, he was prepared to be very fond of his wife, and had already made up his mind that his eldest son should be christened Surbiton. So in due course of time—the furnishing and decoration of the house at Bayswater being satisfactorily completed—Surbiton P. Mellor led Maude Matilda Wilhelmina Fenton to the altar of St. James's, Piccadilly, or St. George's, Hanover square, I forget which; and the Rev. Bajazet Bergamote, M. A., assisted by the Rev. Arthur Gwynplaine, B. D., joined them together in the bonds of holy matrimony, and there were no chads; and the young couple spent their honeymoon in the Engadine, and found the baths of St. Maurice full of the most delightful company.

"A period of four years is supposed to elapse between the first and second acts." At the beginning of act two of my little drama Mr. and Mrs. Surbiton Mellor led society, after a certain fashion, at Gallipoli Villa, Bayswater. They had at least one peer of high rank, the most noble Malagrowthie, on then visiting list. Several Guardsmen had found their way to Gallipoli Villa, and approved of the viands and wine; of Surbiton Mellor, Esq., because he allowed them to smoke; of Mrs. Surbiton Mellor, because she allowed them to smile. She had grown from a pretty girl into a very handsome showy woman, extremely fair, and somewhat inclined to plumpness.

There was no madness in the Mellor-Fenton alliance—no love madness, at least. Surbiton was never troubled with the slightest approach to jealousy as regarded his wife. He knew very well that, being in society and handsome and showy, she must have admirers. He would as soon have thought of forbidding them to admire her as of covering up his handsome furniture, or locking up his wine-cellars. He was an attentive husband, but not an uxorious one. He was eminently reasonable, always in the way when wanted, never importunately present. I believe that the man was really and sincerely attached to his wife, that he had early discovered her weak point, and that her weakness was not of a nature to excite any Othello-like suspicions on his part.

Let me make a clean breast of it as regards Mrs. Surbiton Mellor's foible. The poor woman was desperately extravagant; her prodigality in dress was well nigh inconceivable. When I hint that she thought nothing of giving 2½ guineas a pair for her stays, my lady readers will understand the scale of her sumptuary lavishness. Her expenditure in every other respect was on a commensurate scale. There was no end to her bonnets, her dresses, her mantles, her ribbons, her tags, and her laces. She had parasols by the score, and kid boots by the three dozen pair. Her point-lace pocket-handkerchiefs were a marvel to behold. There were more artificial flowers in her handboxes than real ones in her conservatories and her parterres. Her wardrobe was a very Vale of Cashmere in the way of shawls. She might have filled a small wine-cellar with eau-de-cologne bottles and other perfumed vanities from Mr. Rimmel's. She might have been the wife of Biareis instead of a bank-manager's, so many pairs of gloves did she wear. The richest she-mandarin in Canton might have envied her China crapes. She had a dress trimmed with peacock's feathers, a dress trimmed with leather, and a dress trimmed with straw, and the robe de paule was the dearest of the three. As to her under garments, the entire Ecumenical Council could not have floated in so much fine linen as Mrs. Surbiton Mellor was accustomed to wear. Brussels, Valencennes, Malta, Alengon, Lille, Honiton, and all the Irish convents competed unconsciously for the honor of edging her raiment with lace; and she had fifty fans, and satin slippers enough to have supplied the corps de ballet of the French Grand Opera.

Poor silly creature! She could not help herself, and I think that, after all, there were all the materials for a good woman in Mrs. Surbiton Mellor. She was undeniably good-tempered, amiable, and fond of her husband. One little child had been born to her—a girl, a "show" child—who, from its cradle upwards, was arrayed in degree as extravagantly as she was; and who at three years of age resembled nothing but so much as one of those expensive jointed dolls in the Burlington-arcade, which are costumed like Solomon in all his glory, with trains four times the length of their bodies, and double eye-glasses in their little chubby paws. She was not extravagant in her housekeeping, she had scarcely anything to do with it. She had a first-rate housekeeper, and her husband paid the bills. She knew no more about the price of lamb than she did about that of East India stock. Since her girlhood, perhaps, she had never seen a raw potato, unless, indeed, there had been a greengrocer's close to her favorite bonnet-builder's in Regent Street—and the Regent Street landlords won't grant leases to greengrocers, or butchers, or low people of that kind. Her husband, who was proud of her beauty, and really fond of her personally, gave her plenty of money, but had he poured the hole Consolidated Fund into her lap, it would not have done her much good, I fear. An extravagant person must always be poorer than a workhouse pauper. At the beginning of the fifth year of her wedded life Mrs. Surbiton Mellor was desperately in debt, and was as desperately dunned on every side.

Was her husband aware of her weakness, her folly, her madness? We shall see.

It is difficult for any person, man or woman, to go to the deuce financially, without some active and obliging Mephistopheles to show the way, make it smooth for you, open the gates, clear the tolls and bridges, and do other friendly acts for you, until you are safely landed in the place whence Dante returned, but where Eurydice remained. Mrs. Surbiton Mellor's Mephistopheles was a certain Madame Schumakers, a prodigious fat Dutchwoman from Amsterdam, and who looked well-nigh as solid and substantial as the Stadt Huis of the Batavian capital. She was the most mysterious of women, carrying jewelry of great value in a dirty market-basket, point-lace in her umbrella, and undertaking all kinds of cloudy tasks—from providing false plait and rouge for ladies of quality to smuggling cigars and scheming under her crinoline on board the Rotterdam steamers. She lived anywhere and, as it seemed, everywhere—now to be heard of at Brighton; now lurking about Bath or Cheltenham, now prowling about the corridors of the Grand Hotel, Paris; now sending in occult messages to ladies stopping at the Quatres Saisons at Hombourg, or attending the *petits lever* of duchesses in Belgrave Square. I have met Madame Schumakers myself in the verandah of the Continental Hotel, Saratoga, U. S., where she told me she was "fixing" ladies' hair at a dollar per *couffure*; and she lent me three sovereigns once to go down to the Derby, on condition that I left four pounds ten for her on the ensuing Saturday at the bar of the Shoulder of Mutton, Lower Norcot Street, Lambeth Marsh.

Poor Maude Matilda Wilhelmina had given herself up, body and soul, to this abominous hag, this Witch of Endor qui avait pris du rentre. She was altogether in the Schumakers' hands, who, besides providing her with innumerable articles of finery, lent her money to pay something on account to the fashionable tradespeople when they became disagreeably pressing for the settlement of their little accounts. Of course the articles were supplied at extravagant prices, and the loans advanced at exorbitant rates of interest. The woman was always at Mrs. Mellor's elbow; she had always something to sell or something to lend, until (as commonly happens when you have dealings with Mephistopheles) she suddenly announced one fine morning, at the very height of the season of 186—, that she would not advance another sixpence or another pocket-handkerchief to her customer, and that unless she was forthwith paid the sum of one hundred pounds in cash, on account of her long outstanding claims, the amount of which, she declared, exceeded five hundred pounds, she would forthwith repair to the office of the branch of the Aeolian and Hyperborean Joint Stock Bank, and inform Surbiton P. Mellor how matters stood. "an' den," said Madame Schumakers, in conclusion, "dere will pe der duvel's dondershine!"

This threat happened to have been uttered on precisely the same morning which had brought Mrs. Mellor by post a number of polite but most pressing inquiries from, among other West-end tradesmen, Messrs. Tulle and Tabbinet of Regent-street, Messrs. Goer, Gauffer, and Gigot of Mount-street, Grosvenor-square, and Madame Coralaine of the Burlington-arcade—as to whether Mrs. Surbiton P. Mellor would at once

MRS MELLOR'S DIAMONDS

BY GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA

The West-end of London contained, half a dozen years since, few private residences more eligible and more elegant than the one occupied by Surbiton P. Mellor, Esq., Manager of the Primrose-hill branch of the Aeolian and Hyperborean Joint-Stock Bank. Surbiton P. Mellor, Esq. was essentially a young man of the nineteenth century, and of the seventh decade thereof. Mr. Mellor was bald, but his white forehead was without a wrinkle, and that which remained of his hair was a beautiful brown, and so scientifically brushed over his pianoforte bone as to render his calvity scarcely apparent. His beard was exquisitely glossy and well trimmed, and if it was disposed to be flecked with gray, the sedulous use of tweezers, or the dyer's skill, had eliminated all the silver from his chestnut adornments. He lived generously, and dined well seven times a week; but an extra glass or two of champagne never brought more than a transient flush to his cheek, and even the exceptional dissipation of a Greenwich dinner failed to set its mark on him.

The private residence, Gallipoli Villa, was simply a gem. The noble Marquis of Malagrowthie, who is an excellent judge of cookery, painting, crockery, and other fine arts, and who frequently condescended to dine with the branch manager, declared Gallipoli Villa to be "the snuggest little box" in Bayswater. Of course, when his lordship called it a box, he spoke relatively. But if Gallipoli Villa was a box, it was one containing a great many drawers. Breakfast-room, morning-room, dining-room, and library *en suite*; drawing-rooms, boudoir, and conservatory *au premier*, any number of spare bedrooms; four-stall stable and coach-house, croquet lawn, summer-house, graperie, and pinery in the rear, a glass house for amateur photography, a bowling-alley, and even a snug lodge for the gardener at a corner of the carriage-drive in front, all these appertained to the desirable messuage and tenement which Surbiton P. Mellor, Esq. modestly dubbed a "villa." All was bright, shining, elegant, coquettish, and eminently suggestive of the nineteenth century.

Muder, they say, will out. Surbiton P. Mellor, Esq., had never murdered anybody, and had not the slightest intention to become an assassin, but, lest you should imagine that some dark and terrible mystery environed his being, I may as well tell you briefly and frankly who as well as what he was. He was just a shrewd pushing young man of the nineteenth century (seventh decade), who had made his way, and meant to go a great deal further if he could. His father's name had been certainly Mellor—at least, he was under that designation declared a bankrupt, under that designation and as a coal merchant, in the year 1836. He never paid any dividend, never got his certificate, and taking to drinking, died *Er' Mellor senior*. His widow struggled through a dubious existence in a lodging-house in Salsbury Street, Strand; and when she quitted this vale of tears, poor soul, she had nothing to leave her children—a boy and a girl, aged respectively twenty-two and eighteen—save the gag-end of a lease, and a thin remnant of remakable armchair furniture. The boy Surbiton had been for some time earning a meagre living in the counting-houses of divers City firms.

Surbiton Mellor continued to gain ground in the race of life; but he was far advanced towards thirtynine ere letters addressed to him began to be addressed Surbiton P. Mellor, Esq. He was all kinds of things commercial clerk to a wholesale druggist, sampler to a tea-dealer, traveller to a tobacco-manufacturer, book-keeper to a fashionable West-end tailor. He had done law-writing, he had tried his hand at school-teaching; he had made the round of the provinces delivering lectures in "ventilation" of the features of a newly-formed Life Assurance Company. His first important *aventure* in the world was his appointment as secretary to the Company for manufacturing Lavender-water from Irish bog-peat. That led to connection with the Joots Testimonial Committee (Joots was a commercial philanthropist, who was testimonialised to the extent of ten thousand pounds, as a reward for having made a fortune of half a million by "amalgamating" impudentious companies). Subsequently he became secretary to the Society for the Suppression of Snuff-taking; and was one of the most active promoters of the Anti-Pale Ale League. The road to success was now open, for the chairman of the League happened to be Harpie Wyndford, Esq., who was said to be the son either of the Marquis of Malagrowthie's butler or of his butler. When Mr. Wyndford, Esq. promoted Mellor speedily became manager of the Primrose-hill branch. His success was his own, his money was his own, and both were honestly earned. He had a thousand a year as manager of the branch bank; but that was only a portion of his income. He speculated widely and profitably. He had the revenue of a gentleman, and he lived like one, continuing to pay askeen

attention to business as he did to pleasure. At the commencement of his career he was—notwithstanding a magnificent handwriting and ability to pronounce his *h's* correctly—profoundly illiterate, but, like many other young men of the nineteenth century (seventh decade), he had educated himself to a very fair intellectual status. He had taught himself French and German out of Ollendorff; had always utilised his annual holidays in continental trips; had made careful epitomes of Adam Smith, Ricardo, and Mill; and "Chambers' Educational Course" and the "Penny Cyclopaedia" had done the rest. He read the morning and evening newspapers very carefully, and could hold his own in any society. He went to the theatre very frequently, and could talk about Shakespeare and about burlesques. He had taken surreptitious lessons from an instructress who taught adults to dance in twelve lessons, and a three-guinea course at a Brompton riding-school had enabled him to bestride a lively-stable hack in Rottemore without tumbling off. He had even been seen driving a mail phaeton in Piccadilly very creditably. Whatever he had learned the chariooteer's accomplishment I must confess that I do not know, but techniques have their intuitions, and there are some men who do excellently well that which they have never been taught to do.

forward them cheques for the amounts as per margin, or whether they should instruct their solicitors to make application to Mr Surbiton P Mellor. The poor woman was in despair. She had spent her last quarter's pin-money to the last farthing weeks before. Only five days previously her husband had presented her with a cheque for fifty pounds, "for the necessities," as he jocosely said. Alas! she had paid five-and-forty pounds at once to the cannibals, and they were still hungering for her flesh and her blood.

"How am I to find a hundred pounds?" she cried desperately. "I could as easily find a hundred millions. I can't give you a hundred pence, and if you speak to my husband, I shall be utterly and entirely ruined."

"Bah!" replied the Dutchwoman, "fat vor you drubbel yourself so much, mein tear? It is easy enov. De money's comeatterful. You af your diamonds."

"Yes, surely. De beautiful diamonds Mr Mellor (de gud shentleman!) he pay you only last year, an' gif you on your birthday when you vash dventy-doo!"

"But Mr Mellor likes me to wear those diamonds. He was looking at them in my jewel-case only this morning, and admiring them, and I am to wear them this very night at the French plays."

"Bah, I say agen. Fat a teir hiddle stoopid lof of a lady you are! Deric is diamonds and diamonds. Bring me de britty hiddle dings, and I will ged dem match by our o'clock dis fery afternoon, and I will lent you vivly bounds more, and geep them in bledge, and lent you de oders vich is baste, and your horspond he not know nerfer one tam ding aboud de drick ve blay. Ah, ah! Hah!" And Madame Schumakers took snuff like an ogress—if-gresses ever took snuff, which believe they did.

What was the wretched Maude Matilda Wilhelmina to do? What but how down before the demon and obey her? This interview, I may observe, took place about noon in the upper room of a house in Newman-street, Oxford-street, where Madame Schumakers, trading under the name of Van Tromp, De Ruyter, and Co., announced herself, with her partner and the company, to be dealers in articles of virtue. Her victim took a four-wheeler. This time she did not haggle with the cabman; for she had purposely left her house on foot, and hastened back to Gallipoli Villa. She rushed upstairs to her bedroom, keeping the cab at the door, and an hour afterwards Madame Schumakers, alias Van Tromp, alias De Ruyter, alias Co., was in possession of Mrs Mellor's Diamonds.

Now these diamonds, the birthday present of Surbiton P Mellor, Esq., and which had cost at Messrs Hancock's no less a sum than seven hundred and fifty pounds, consisted of a necklace, two bracelets, a locket, a spray for the hair, and a pair of earrings, all in brilliants of the purest water. They were to be held in pledge by Madame Schumakers for the sum of four hundred pounds, which she alleged to be due to her, and were to be restored to Mrs Mellor on the payment of four hundred and fifty pounds, the balance being advanced to that demented woman in cash, and Madame Schumakers very generously changing nothing at all for interest. Mean while Mrs Mellor took home a morocco-case, containing a suite of diamonds, which certainly appeared to be the exact counterpart of her real gems; and in this suit she attended, as previously arranged, the performance of the French plays with her attached husband, and was infinitely admired for the splendor of her *parure*.

A few evenings afterwards—they were to dine at home and alone—Mr Mellor was, contrary to his established habits, fully three-quarters of an hour late. When he did come, it was in a state of great disorder, and with a pale and disturbed countenance. For a long time he remained silent, and the dinner was sent down untested. Then he hastily swallowed a glass of sherry, and after pacing the room for some time, thus addressed himself to speech:

"Mall"—this was her *petit nom*—"I have some terrible news to tell you."

She turned pale, and felt ready to swoon, she thought for a moment that the bank had broken. It was not that, however, but, so far as her husband was concerned, even a worse calamity. He explained that he had recently embarked in very hazardous speculations, and that those speculations had proved very unlucky. He was, he said, on the verge and brink of ruin. He had embezzled a large amount of the funds of the bank, and an investigation—which might take place at any moment—would inevitably lead to his arrest on a criminal charge. He had raised money, he said, on all his available property. There was a bill of sale on the fine furniture in Gallipoli Villa, the lease of the house was mortgaged, but he still lacked four hundred pounds to complete the deficiency in his accounts.

"Four hundred pounds," he concluded, "would save me, or at least give me time to turn myself round. There are those diamonds of yours, Mall. I gave seven hundred and fifty pounds for them, and surely they ought to be good for four hundred. Mall, my own dear true wife, you must let me have those diamonds, and we must pawn them. It grieves me to the heart to do so, for you looked superb in them last night."

She blushed, turned pale, stammered, equivocated, asked what the world would say, and whether there were no other means of tiding over the difficulty. She was told that there were none; and as for the world, her husband cried out passionately that it might say what it liked, and go hang. She offered him all her other trinkets; he told her distantly, fully that, altogether, they would not fetch a hundred pounds, and that he must have the diamonds. She said faintly that she could not let him have them. He stared at her for some moments in blank amazement, and then, passing from entreaty to command, insisted on having the jewels forthwith, adding that, if she did not instantly obey him, he would take them from her by force. Sick with terror and apprehension of discovery, the wretched woman went upstairs, and returning, brought the morocco case, and laid it tremblingly on the dining-room table. He opened the *écrin*, and sarcastically admired the sheen and sparkle of the gems. Then he told her that early the next morning they must be taken to the pawnbrokers; but that she should go with him, and assure herself that he had been telling the truth. She remembered the fatuity of the stones, and the marrow in her spine turned cold.

After a night spent in infinite and sleepless wretchedness, the cheerless morning came; and Mr and Mrs Mellor drove in their elegant brougham down to Beaufort-buildings, Strand, at the corner of which, at the time I speak, was the well-known pawnbroking establishment of Mr Amos Scantleberry. They entered the "private office," in which loans of too much importance to be discussed in the vulgar boxes where the poor pawned their clothes were negotiated, and the diamonds were submitted to Mr Amos Scantleberry, who was reputed to be one of the best judges of precious stones in Europe. That gentleman examined Mrs Mellor's "dia-

monds" minutely, weighed and tested them, and did not hesitate for the moment in advancing on them the sum required—four hundred pounds sterling. He paid over the amount at once in circ.-bank notes, and a bond for the loan, at a rate of interest agreed upon, was made out. This document, Mr Mellor handed to his wife, telling her sardonically, that she might very soon redeem her finery if she would only practise a little economy for a time. He seemed to have become a very different personage from the Surbiton P. Mellor of the day before yesterday, and of the four happy years of their married life. At the pawnbroker's door he handed her into her brougham, and saying that he had an engagement in the City, left her.

She went home half-distracted. In the course of a few hours she was certain the spurious nature of the gems must be discovered, and her husband would be prosecuted for fraud. What was she to do? Why had she not told him the truth in the first instance? He would have killed her, had she confessed that her real diamonds were in the custody of Madame Schumakers. But then those embezzled funds belonging to the bank, and the awful peril he was in, it was too late, and something must be done. She sat for hours revolving in her mind scheme after scheme, but none seemed practicable. At length, with shame and horror and ghastly loathing, she hit upon one which appealed feasible. She could borrow eight hundred pounds. Somebody had told her so over and over again. Why had she not gone to him when the big Schumakers pressed her? Because she was afraid and ashamed. But the worst must come now, and she must brave it.

Somebody lived in very grand style in the Albany—and in very grand style too—and was highly courted, oiled, ringed, chained, pinned, and locked. Somebody's name was Mossby—Mr Algernon Mossby, and somebody else—by whom may be meant everybody or anybody—declared that the name of Algernon Mossby was only an elegant paraphrase of the less aristocratic appellation of Abraham Moses. Mr Mossby was a frequent visitor at Gallipoli Villa. Mr Mossby had horses and carriages and a yacht. Mr Mossby was a gay man, fashionable man, and Mr Mossby admitted Mrs Surbiton P Mellor to distinction, and had frequently insinuated that not only was his heart laid at her feet, but that his purse was at her command.

She had been a good and true wife to her husband, and had never given the oily, impudent, much be-jewelled Jew any undue encouragement. She was determined to give him none now, due as was her extremity. She went nevertheless to his chambers in the Albany within an hour after leaving Mr Scantleberry's establishment, and she fell on her knees before Mr. Algernon Mossby, and besought him to save her from utter ruin and destruction. Mr Mossby behaved with thorough gallantry. He admitted that eight hundred pounds was a very large sum, but he thought, he said, that he could at once oblige her with a cheque for the amount. For all security he merely required her note of hand, payable on demand for the sum of eight hundred pounds and for "value received."

"That is enough, my dear Mrs Mellor," said Mr Algernon Mossby, as he handed her the cheque and locked up the missive note in his cash-box. "I will make my demand all in good time. That little scrap of writing is quite sufficient to ruin your reputation if produced, and I have no doubt that ere I produce it we shall have arrived at a very satisfactory understanding. Allow me to conduct you to the door of the staircase is rather dark."

Half-distracted she hastened to Mr Scantleberry's, stopping on her way at the bank to get the cheque cashed. She had still the fifty pounds which the Dutchwoman had advanced to her on the previous day, and with the eight hundred lent to her by Mr Algernon Mossby, she felt that one great peril was at least surmounted. Mr Scantleberry seemed somewhat surprised to see her, but on her producing the loan-bond and the requisite money, handed her over the diamonds. She hurried then to Madame Schumakers in Foley Street, who was delighted to see her, the more so, she said as she was starting for Rotterdam that very evening. To her Mrs Mellor handed the sum of four hundred and fifty pounds and received her jewel case and her own diamonds. Now she felt relieved. She would hasten back to Mr Scantleberry's re-pawn her diamonds, and then give Mossby back half his money. He would surely wait for the test. It was four in the afternoon ere she reached Beaufort-buildings, and in a few half-incoherent words explained that, through unforeseen events, she was compelled to renew the transaction of the previous day. The pawnbroker bowed, observed that such things frequently happened in the way of business, and proceeded to examine the jewels—merely, he observed, as a matter of form. Mrs Mellor felt perfectly at ease as he weighed and tested them, in this, at least, there was no fraud, she thought.

Suddenly the pawnbroker fixed upon her a searching glance.

"These are not the stones you brought me yesterday, madam," he said.

"At all events," Mrs Mellor faltered out, "they are my own jewels, and fully worth the sum I ask upon them."

"I only know," replied Mr Scantleberry, very slowly and deliberately, and handing her back her "diamonds," "that the stones you brought me yesterday were genuine, and of great value—and that these are FAKE."

"False!"

"False, madam, you may take them to any lapidary—to any judge of precious stones in London and he will tell you that they are not worth ten pounds. There has been some very ugly mistake here." And with a low bow Mr Scantleberry retired into his back office.

She found herself, she knew not how, in the street. She was now utterly, entirely ruined. She had no diamonds at all, either in pledge or in her own possession; and the accursed Mr Algernon Mossby of the Albany held her note of hand for eight hundred pounds "for value received." She would go home, she thought, and kill herself.

"No, my darling," said Surbiton P. Mellor that night, when she had thrown herself at his feet, and with passionate tears and utterances confessed all, "you are not ruined, no harm has come to you at all, or to me either, for the matter of that. I have merely been reading you a little lesson, to cure you of your one fault—extravagance. The diamonds I gave you on your birthday were false. I knew that, sooner or later, they would come into the possession of that Dutch hildame, Schumakers. I found the bag out, and took her into my pay; I intrusted to her the real diamonds, which she gave you as imitation ones. They were the real stones we pawned, and the sham ones which you afterwards vainly endeavored to pledge. As to Mr Algernon Mossby, he is my very good friend and agent to command. Here is your note of hand, and it may relieve your mind to know, that I was concealed in the next room throughout our interview with that oblonging

gentleman in the Albany. He will come no more to this house, and he has five hundred good reasons for holding his tongue. Now, then, come and give me a kiss, and to-morrow morning I'll give you your real diamonds and your sham ones too. Only, under any circumstance, don't take either the genuine or the spurious ones to Foley Street, to Beaufort Buildings, or to the Albany."

The cure was efficacious and complete. Mrs Surbiton P. Mellor has since made considerable additions to her jewel-case, but she has ceased to raise money either on the hypothecation of her personal effects or on notes of hand—*ad gratia*.

Collins, Wilkie

Harper's Bazaar (1867-1912); Jan 12, 1878; 11, 2; ProQuest

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(Continued from Supplement, Vol. XI, No. 1, p. 20.)

MY LADY'S MONEY:
AN EPISODE IN THE LIFE OF A YOUNG GIRL,RELATED BY
WILKIE COLLINS.

PERSONS OF THE STORY.

WOMEN.

LADY LYDIARD (*Widow of Lord Lydiard*).
ISABEL MILLER (*her adopted Daughter*).MISS PINK (*of South Horden*).
THE HON. MRS. DRUMBLADE (*Sister of the Hon. Alfred*
Hardyman).

MEN.

THE HON. ALFRED HARDYMAN (*of the same farm*).
MR. FELIX SWETHEIN (*Lady Lydiard's Nephew*).ROBERT MOODY (*Lady Lydiard's Factotum*).MR. TROY (*Lady Lydiard's Lawyer*).OLD SHARON (*in the By-ways of Legal Bohemia*).

ANIMAL.

TOMMIE (*Lady Lydiard's Dog*).PART THE SECOND.
THE DISCOVERY.

CHAPTER XIII.—(Continued.)

WITHOUT further preface she described the circumstances which had led to her assuming the perilous responsibility of sealing the letter. Old Sharon's wandering attention began to wander again: he was evidently occupied in setting another trap. For the second time he interrupted Isabel in the middle of a sentence. Suddenly stopping short, he pointed to some sheep at the farther end of the field through which they happened to be passing at the moment.

"There's a pretty sight!" he said. "There are the innocent sheep a-feeding—all following each other as usual; and there's the sly dog waiting behind the gate till the sheep want his services. Reminds me of Old Sharon and the public!" He chuckled over his discovery of the remarkable similarity between the sheep-dog and himself, and the sheep and the public, and then burst upon Isabel with a second question. "I say I didn't you look at the letter before you sealed it?"

"Certainly not," Isabel answered.

"Not even at the address?"

"No."

"Thinking of something else—eh?"

"Very likely," said Isabel.

"Was it your new bonnet, my dear?"

Isabel laughed. "Women are not always thinking of their new bonnets," she answered.

Old Sharon, to all appearance, dropped the subject there. He lifted his lean brown forefinger and pointed again, this time to a house at a short distance from them. "That's a farm-house, surely," he said. "I'm thirsty, after my roll down the hill. Do you think, miss, they would give me a drink of milk?"

"I am sure they would," said Isabel. "I know the people. Shall I go and ask them?"

"Thank you, my dear. One word more before you go. About the sealing of that letter: what could you have been thinking of while you were doing it?" He looked hard at her, and took her suddenly by the arm. "Was it your sweetheart?" he asked, in a whisper.

The question instantly reminded Isabel that she had been thinking of Hardyman while she sealed the letter. She blushed as the remembrance crossed her mind. Robert, noticing her embarrassment, spoke sharply to Old Sharon. "You have no right to put such a question to a young lady," he said. "Be a little more careful for the future."

"There! there! I don't be hard on me," pleaded the old rogue. "An ugly old man like me may make his innocent little joke—eh, miss? I'm sure you're too sweet-tempered to be angry when I meant no offense. Show me that you hear no malice. Go, like a forgiving young angel, and ask for the milk!"

Nobody appealed to Isabel's sweetness of temper in vain. "I will do it with pleasure," she said, and hastened away to the farm-house.

CHAPTER XIV.

The instant Isabel was out of hearing, Old Sharon slapped Moody on the shoulder to rouse his attention. "I've got her out of the way," he said; "now listen to me. My business with the young angel is done; I may go back to London."

Moody looked at him in astonishment.

"Lord! how little you know of thieves!" exclaimed Old Sharon. "Why, man alive, I have tried her with two plain tests. If you wanted a proof of her innocence, there it was, as plain as the nose on your face. Did you hear me ask her how she came to seal the letter, just when her mind was running on something else?"

"I heard you," said Moody.

"Did you see how she started and stared at me?"

"I did."

"Well, I can tell you this: if she had stolen the money, she would neither have started nor stared. She would have had her answer ready, beforehand, in her own mind, in case of accidents. There's only one thing, in my experience, that you can never do with a thief, when the thief happens to be a woman—you can never take her by surprise. Put that remark by in your mind: one day you may find a use for remembering it. Did you see her blushing, and look quite hurt in her feelings, pretty dear, when I asked about her sweetheart? Do you think a thief, in her place, would have shown such a face as that? Not she! The thief would have been relieved. The thief would have said to herself, 'All right; the more the old fool talks about sweethearts, the further he is from tracing the robbery to me.' Yes! yes! I've reckoned up the servants; I've questioned Miss Isa-

bel; I've made my inquiries in all the other quarters that may be useful to us—and what's the result? The advice I gave, when you and the lawyer first came to me—I hate that fellow!—remains as sound and good advice as ever. I have got the thief in my mind," said Old Sharon, closing his cunning eyes and then opening them again, "as plain as I've got you in my eye at this minute. No more of that now," he went on, looking round sharply at the path that led to the farmhouse; "I've something particular to say to you, and there's barely time to say it before that nice girl comes back. Look here! do you happen to be acquainted with Mr. Honorable-Hardyman's valet?"

Moody's eyes rested on Old Sharon with a searching and doubtful look.

"Mr. Hardyman's valet?" he repeated. "I wasn't prepared to hear Mr. Hardyman's name."

Old Sharon looked at Moody, in his turn, with a flash of sardonic triumph.

"Oho!" he said; "has my good boy learned his lesson? Do you see the thief through my spectacles already?"

"I began to see him," Moody answered, "when you gave us the guinea opinion at your lodgings."

"Will you whisper his name?" asked Old Sharon.

"Not yet. I distrust my own judgment. I'll wait till time proves that you're right."

Old Sharon knitted his shaggy brows and shook his head. "If you only had a little more dash and go in you," he said, "you would be a clever fellow. As it is—" He finished the sentence by snapping his fingers with a grin of contempt. "Let's get to business. Are you going back by the next train along with me, or are you going to stop with the young lady?"

"I will follow you by a later train," Moody answered.

"Then I must give you your instructions at once," Sharon continued. "You get better acquainted with Hardyman's valet. Lend him money if he wants it; stick at nothing to make a bosom-friend of him. I can't do that part of it; my appearance would be against me. You are the man; you are respectable from the top of your hat to the tips of your boots; nobody would suspect You. Don't make objections! Can you fix the valet? Or can't you?"

"I can try," said Moody. "And what then?"

Old Sharon put his gross lips disagreeably close to Moody's ear.

"Your friend the valet can tell you who his master's bankers are," he said; "and he can supply you with a specimen of his master's handwriting."

Moody drew back as suddenly as if his vagabond companion had put a knife at his throat.

"You old villain!" he said; "are you tempting me to forgery?"

"You infernal fool!" retorted Old Sharon.

"Will you hold that long tongue of yours, and hear what I have to say? You go to Hardyman's bankers, with a note in Hardyman's handwriting (exactly imitated by me) to this effect:

'Mr. H. presents his compliments to Messrs. So-and-So, and is not quite certain whether a payment of five hundred pounds has been made

within the last week to his account. He will be

much obliged if Messrs. So-and-So will inform

him by a line in reply whether there is such an

entry to his credit in their books, and by whom

the payment has been made.' You wait for the

bankers' answer, and bring it to me. It's just

possible that the name you're afraid to whisper

may appear in the letter. If it does, we've caught

our man. Is that forgery, Mr. Middlehead Moody?"

I'll tell you what—if I had lived to be in

your age, and knew no more of the world than you

do, I'd go and hang myself. Steady! here's our

charming friend with the milk. Remember your

instructions, and don't lose heart if my notion of

the payment to the bankers' comes to nothing.

I know what to do next, in that case—and, what's

more, I'll take all the risk and trouble on my

own shoulders. O Lord! I'm afraid I shall be

obliged to drink the milk, now it's come!"

With this apprehension in his mind, he advanced to relieve Isabel of the jug she carried.

"Here's a treat!" he burst out, with an affectation of joy, which was completely belied by the expression of his dirty face. "Here's a kind and dear young lady, to help an old man to drink with her own pretty hands!" He paused, and looked at the milk very much as he might have looked at a dose of physic. "Will any one take a drink first?" he asked, offering the jug pitifully to Isabel and Moody. "You see, I'm not used to genuine milk; I'm used to chalk and water. I don't know what effect the unadulterated cow might have on my poor old inside." He tasted the milk with the greatest caution. "Upon my soul, this is too rich for me! The unadulterated cow is a deal too strong to be drunk alone. I'll give you all I have, I'll qualify it with a drop of gin. Here, Puggy! Puggy!" He set the milk down before the dog, and taking a flask out of his pocket, emptied it at a draught. "That's something like!" he said, smacking his lips with an air of infinite relief. "So sorry, miss, to have given you all your trouble for nothing; it's my ignorance that's to blame, not me. I couldn't know I was unworthy of genuine milk till I tried—I could! And do you know," he proceeded, with his eyes directed slyly on the way back to the station, "begin to think I'm not worthy of the fresh air either. A kind of a longing seems to come over me for the London stink. I'm homesick already; for the soot of my happy childhood and my own dear native mud. The air here is too thin for me, and the sky's too clean; and—O Lord!—when you're used to the roar of the traffic—the busses and the cabs and what not—the silence in these parts is downright awful. I'll wish you good-evening, miss, and get back to London."

Isabel turned to Moody with disappointment plainly expressed in her face and manner.

"Is that all he has to say?" she asked. "You told me he could help us. You led me to suppose he could find the guilty person."

Sharon heard her. "I could name the guilty person," he answered, "as easily, miss, as I could name you."

"Why don't you do it, then?" Isabel inquired, not very patiently.

"Because the time's not ripe for it yet, miss—that's one reason. Because, if I mentioned the thief's name, as things are now, you, Miss Isabel, would think me mad; and you would tell Mr. Moody I had cheated him out of his money—that's another reason. The matter's in train, if you will only wait a little longer."

"So you say," Isabel rejoined. "If you really could name the thief, I believe you would do it now."

She turned away with a frown on her pretty face. Old Sharon followed her. Even his coarse sensibilities appeared to feel the irresistible ascendancy of beauty and youth.

"I say!" he began, "we must part friends, you know, or I shall break my heart over it. They have got milk at the farm-house. Do you think they have got pen, ink, and paper too?"

Isabel answered, without turning to look at him. "Of course they have."

"And a bit of sealing-wax?"

"I dare say."

Old Sharon laid his dirty claws on her shoulder, and forced her to face him as the best means of shaking them off.

"Come along!" he said. "I am going to pacify you with some information in writing."

"Why should you write it?" Isabel asked, suspiciously.

"Because I mean to make my own conditions, my dear, before I let you into the secret."

In ten minutes more they were all three in the farm-house parlor. Nobody but the farmer's wife was at home. The good woman trembled from head to foot at the sight of Old Sharon. In all her harmless life she had never yet seen humanity under the aspect in which it was now presented to her. "Mercy preserve us, miss!" she whispered to Isabel, "how come you to be in such company as *that*?" Instructed by Isabel, she produced the necessary materials for writing and sealing, and that done, she shrank away to the door. "Please to excuse me, miss," she said, with a last horrified look at her venerable visitor; "I really can't stand the sight of such a blot of dirt as that in my nice clean parlor." With those words she disappeared, and was seen no more.

Perfectly indifferent to his reception, Old Sharon wrote, inclosed what he had written in an envelope, and sealed it (in the absence of any thing better fitted for his purpose) with the mouth-piece of his pipe.

"Now, miss," he said, "you give me your word

of honor"—he stopped and looked round at Moody with a grin—"and you give me yours, that you

won't either of you break the seal on this envelope till the expiration of one week from the present day. There are the conditions, Miss Isabel, on which I'll give you your information. If you

go to dispute with me, the candle's a-light, and I'll burn the letter."

It was useless to contend with him. Isabel and Moody gave him the promise that he required.

He handed the sealed envelope to Isabel with a low bow. "When the week's out," he said, "you will own I'm a cleverer fellow than you think me now. Wish you good-evening, miss. Come along, Puggy! Farewell to the horrid clean country, and back again to the nice London stink!"

He nodded to Moody—he leered at Isabel—he chuckled to himself—he left the farm-house.

CHAPTER XV.

ISABEL looked down at the letter in her hand, considered it in silence, and turned to Moody. "I feel tempted to open it already," she said.

"After giving your promise?" Moody gently remonstrated.

Isabel met that objection with a woman's logic.

"Does a promise matter," she asked, "when one gives it to a dirty, disreputable, presuming old wretch like Mr. Sharon?" It's a wonder to me that you trust such a creature. I wouldn't!"

"I doubted him just as you do," Moody answered, "when I first saw him in company with Mr. Troy. But there was something in the advice he gave us at that first consultation which altered my opinion of him for the better. I dislike his appearance and his manners as much as you do—I may even say I felt ashamed of bringing such a person to see you. And yet I can't think that I have acted unwisely in employing Mr. Sharon."

Isabel listened absently. She had something more to say, and she was considering how she should say it. "May I ask you a bold question?" she began.

"Any question you like."

"Have you—" She hesitated and looked embarrassed.

"Have you paid Mr. Sharon much money?" she resumed, suddenly rallying her courage. Instead of answering, Moody suggested that it was time to think of returning to Miss Pink's villa. "Your aunt may be getting anxious about you," he said, carelessly.

"Yes; she's worried about you. How d'ye do?" Moody, with his eyes on the ground, answered silently by a bow. Hardyman, perfectly indifferent whether Lady Lydiard's steward spoke or not, turned on his saddle, and looked admiringly at Isabel. "I begin to think my luck has turned at last," he went on, with a smile. "I was jogging along to my farm, and despairing of ever seeing Miss Isabel again—and Miss Isabel herself meets me at the road-side! I wonder whether you are as glad to see me as I am to see you? You won't tell me, eh? May I ask you something else? Are you staying in our neighborhood?"

There was no alternative before Isabel but to answer this last question. Hardyman had met her out walking, and had no doubt drawn the inevitable inference, although he was too polite to say so in plain words.

"Yes, Sir," she answered, shyly; "I am staying in this neighborhood."

"And who is your relation?" Hardyman proceeded, in his easy, matter-of-course way. "Lady Lydiard told me, when I had the pleasure of meeting you at her house, that you had an aunt

"How good you are to me, Mr. Moody!" she said. "I wish I could tell you how deeply I feel your kindness."

"You can do it easily," he answered, with a smile. "Call me 'Robert'; don't call me 'Mr. Moody'."

She took his arm with a sudden familiarity that charmed him. "If you had been my brother I should have called you 'Robert,'" she said; "and no brother could have been more devoted to me than you are."

He looked eagerly at her bright face turned up to his. "May I never hope to be something nearer and dearer to you than a brother?" he asked, timidly.

She hung her head and said nothing. Moody's memory recalled Sharon's coarse reference to her "sweetheart." She had blushed when he put the question. What had she done when Moody put his question? Her face answered for her—she had turned pale; she was looking more serious than usual. Ignorant as he was of the ways of women, his instinct told him that this was a bad sign. Surely her rising color would have confessed it, if time and gratitude together were teaching her to love him? He sighed as the inevitable conclusion forced itself on his mind.

"I hope I have not offended you?" he said, sadly. "Oh no."

"I wish I had not spoken. Pray don't think that I am serving you with any selfish motive." "I don't think that, Robert. I never could think it of you."

He was not quite satisfied yet. "Even if you were to marry some other man," he went on, earnestly, "it would make no difference in what I am trying to do for you. No matter what I might suffer, I should still go on—for your sake."

"Why do you talk so?" she burst out, passionately. "No other man has such a claim as yours to my gratitude and regard. How can you let such thought come to you? I have done nothing in secret. I have no friends who are not known to you. Be satisfied with that, Robert. and let us drop the subject."

"Never to take it up again?" he asked, with the infatuated pertinacity of a man clinging to his last hope.

At other times and under other circumstances Isabel might have answered him sharply. She spoke with perfect gentleness now.

"Not for the present," she said. "I don't know my own heart. Give me time."

His gratitude caught at those words, as the drowning man is said to catch at the proverbial straw. He lifted her hand, and suddenly and fondly pressed his lips on it. She showed no confusion. Was she sorry for him, poor wretched—and was that all?

"Miss Isabel!"

She started, looked up, and discovered—Alfred Hardyman.

He was dressed in a perfectly made travelling suit of light brown, with a peaked felt hat of a darker shade of the same color, which, in a picturesque sense, greatly improved his personal appearance. His pleasure at discovering Isabel gave the animation to his features which they wanted on ordinary occasions. He sat his horse, a superb hunter, easily and gracefully. His light amber-colored gloves fitted him perfectly. His obedient servant, on another magnificent horse, waited behind him. He looked the impersonation of rank and breeding, of wealth and prosperity. What a contrast, in a woman's eyes, to the shy, pale, melancholy man in the ill-fitting black clothes, with the wandering, uneasy glances, who stood beneath him, and felt, and showed that he felt, his inferior position keenly! In spite of herself, the treacherous blush flew over Isabel's face, in Moody's presence, and with Moody's eyes distrustfully watching her.

"This is a piece of good fortune that I hardly hoped for," said Hardyman, his cool, quiet, dreary way of speaking quickened, as usual, in Isabel's presence. "I only got back from France this morning, and I called on Lady Lydiard in the hope of seeing you. She was not at home, and you were in the country, and the servants didn't know the address. I could get nothing out of them, except that you were on a visit to a relation." He looked at Moody while he was speaking. "Haven't I seen you before?" he said, carelessly. "Yes; at Lady Lydiard's villa. You're her steward, are you not? How d'ye do?" Moody, with his eyes on the ground, answered silently by a bow.

Hardyman, perfectly indifferent whether Lady Lydiard's steward spoke or not, turned on his saddle, and looked admiringly at Isabel. "I begin to think my luck has turned at last," he went on, with a smile. "I was jogging along to my farm, and despairing of ever seeing Miss Isabel again—and Miss Isabel herself meets me at the road-side! I wonder whether you are as glad to see me as I am to see you? You won't tell me, eh? May I ask you something else? Are you staying in our neighborhood?"

There was no alternative before Isabel but to answer this last question. Hardyman had met her out walking, and had no doubt drawn the inevitable inference, although he was too polite to say so in plain words.

"Yes, Sir," she answered, shyly; "I am staying in this neighborhood."

"And who is your relation?" Hardyman proceeded, in his easy, matter-of-course way. "Lady Lydiard told me, when I had the pleasure of meeting you at her house, that you had an aunt

living in the country. I have a good memory, Miss Isabel, for any thing that I hear about You. It's your aunt, isn't it? Yes? I know every body about here. What is your aunt's name?"

Isabel, still resting her hand on Robert's arm, felt it tremble a little as Hardyman made this last inquiry. If she had been speaking to one of her equals, she would have known how to dispose of the question without directly answering it. But what could she say to the magnificent gentleman on the stately horse? He had only to send his servant into the village to ask who the young lady from London was staying with, and the answer, in a dozen mouths at least, would direct him to her aunt. She cast one appealing look at Moody, and pronounced the distinguishing name of Miss Pink.

"Miss Pink?" Hardyman repeated. "Surely I know Miss Pink." (He had not the faintest remembrance of her.) "Where did I meet her last?" (He ran over in his memory the different local festivals at which strangers had been introduced to him.) "Was it at the archery meeting? or at the grammar school when the prizes were given? No? It must have been at the flower show, then, surely?"

It had been at the flower show. Isabel had heard it from Miss Pink fifty times at least, and was obliged to admit it now.

"I am quite ashamed of never having called," Hardyman proceeded. "The fact is, I have so much to do. I am a bad one at paying visits. Are you on your way home? Let me follow you and make my apologies personally to Miss Pink."

Moody looked at Isabel. It was only a momentary glance, but she perfectly understood it.

"I am afraid, Sir, my aunt can not have the honor of seeing you to-day," she said.

Hardyman was all compliance. He smiled, and patted his horse's neck. "To-morrow, then," he said. "My compliments, and I will call in the afternoon. Let me see: Miss Pink lives at—." He waited, as if he expected Isabel to assist his treacherous memory once more. She hesitated again. Hardyman looked round at his groom. The groom could find out the address, even if he did not happen to know it already. Besides, there was the little row of houses visible at the farther end of the road. Isabel pointed to the villa, as a necessary concession to good manners, before the groom could anticipate her. "My aunt lives there, Sir, at the house called The Lawn."

"Ah! to be sure," said Hardyman. "I oughtn't to have wanted reminding; but I have so many things to think of at the farm. And I am afraid I must be getting old; my memory isn't as good as it was. I am so glad to have seen you, Miss Isabel. You and your aunt must come and look at my horses. Do you like horses? Are you fond of riding? I have a quiet roan mare that is used to carrying ladies; she would be just the thing for you. Did I beg you to give my best compliments to your aunt? Yes? How well you are looking! our air here agrees with you. I hope I haven't kept you standing too long? I didn't think of it in the pleasure of meeting you. Good-by, Miss Isabel—good-by till to-morrow."

He took off his hat to Isabel, nodded to Moody, and pursued his way to the farm.

Isabel looked at her companion. His eyes were still on the ground. Pale, silent, motionless, he waited by her like a dog, until she gave the signal of walking on toward the house.

"You are not angry with me for speaking to Mr. Hardyman?" she asked, anxiously.

He lifted his head at the sound of her voice. "Angry with you, my dear? Why should I be angry?"

"You seemed so changed, Robert, since we met Mr. Hardyman. I couldn't help speaking to him, could I?"

"Certainly not."

They moved on toward the villa. Isabel was still uneasy. There was something in Moody's silent submission to all that she said and all that she did which pained and humiliated her. "You're not jealous?" she said, smiling timidly.

He tried to speak lightly on his side. "I have no time to be jealous while I have your affairs to look after," he answered.

She pressed his arm tenderly. "Never fear, Robert, that new friends will make me forget the best and dearest friend who is now at my side." She paused, and looked up at him with a compassionate fondness that was very pretty to see. "I can keep out of the way to-morrow, when Mr. Hardyman calls," she said. "It is my aunt he is coming to see—not me."

It was generously meant. But while her mind was only occupied with the present time, Moody's mind was looking into the future. He was learning the hard lesson of self-sacrifice already. "Do what you think right," he said, quietly; "don't think of me."

They reached the gate of the villa. He held out his hand to say good-by.

"Won't you come in?" she asked. "Do come in."

"Not now, my dear. I must get back to London as soon as I can. There is some more work to be done for you, and the sooner I do it the better."

She heard his excuse without heeding it.

"You are not like yourself, Robert," she said.

"Why is it? What are you thinking of?"

He was thinking of the bright blush that overspread her face when Hardyman first spoke to her; he was thinking of the invitation to her to see the stud farm, and to ride the roan mare; he was thinking of the utterly powerless position in which he stood toward Isabel and toward the highly born gentleman who admired her. But he kept his doubts and fears to himself. "The train won't wait for me," he said, and held out his hand once more.

She was not only perplexed, she was really distressed. "Don't take leave of me in that cold way!" she pleaded. Her eyes dropped before his, and her lips trembled a little. "Give me a kiss, Robert, at parting." She said those bold

words softly and sadly, out of the depth of her pity for him. He started; his face brightened suddenly; his sinking hope rose again. In another moment he understood her. As he touched her cheek with his lips, he turned pale again. "Don't quite forget me," he said, in low, faltering tones, and left her.

Miss Pink met Isabel in the hall. Refreshed by unbroken repose, the ex-school-mistress was in the happiest frame of mind for the reception of her niece's news.

Informed that Moody had travelled to South Morden to personally report the progress of the inquiries, Miss Pink highly approved of him as a substitute for Mr. Troy. "Mr. Moody, as a banker's son, is a gentleman by birth," she remarked; "he has descended in becoming Lady Lydiard's steward. What I saw of him, when he came here with you, prepossessed me in his favor. He has my confidence, Isabel, as well as yours; he is in every respect a superior person to Mr. Troy. Did you meet any friends, my dear, when you were out walking?"

The answer to this question produced a species of transformation in Miss Pink. The rapturous rank-worship of her nature feasted, so to speak, on Hardyman's message. She looked taller and younger than usual; she was all smiles and sweetness. "At last, Isabel, you have seen birth and breeding under their right aspect," she said. "In the society of Lady Lydiard you can not possibly have formed correct ideas of the English aristocracy. Observe Mr. Hardyman when he does me the honor to call to-morrow, and you will see the difference."

"Mr. Hardyman is your visitor, aunt, not mine. I was going to ask you to let me remain up stairs in my room."

Miss Pink was unaffectedly shocked. "This is what you mean at Lady Lydiard's?" she observed. "No, Isabel, your absence would be a breach of good manners; I can not possibly permit it. You will be present to receive our distinguished friend with me. And mind this," added Miss Pink, in her most impressive manner, "if Mr. Hardyman should by any chance ask why you have left Lady Lydiard, not one word about those disgraceful circumstances which connect you with the loss of the bank-note! I should sink into the earth if the smallest hint of what has really happened should reach Mr. Hardyman's ears. My child, I stand toward you in the place of your lamented mother. I have the right to command your silence on this horrible subject, and I do imperatively command it."

In these words foolish Miss Pink sowed the seed for the harvest of trouble that was soon to come.

CHAPTER XVI.

PAYING his court to the ex-school-mistress on the next day, Hardyman made such excellent use of his opportunities that the visit to the stud farm took place on the day after. His own carriage was placed at the disposal of Isabel and her aunt, and his own sister was present to confer special distinction on the reception of Miss Pink.

In a country like England, which annually suspends the sitting of its legislature in honor of a horse-race, it is only natural and proper that the comfort of the horses should be the first object of consideration at a stud farm. Nine-tenths of the land at Hardyman's farm were devoted, in one way or another, to the noble quadruped with the low forehead and the long nose. Poor humanity was satisfied with second-rate and third-rate accommodation. The ornamental grounds, very poorly laid out, were also very limited in extent; and as for the dwelling-house, it was literally a cottage. A parlor and a kitchen, a smoking-room, a bedroom, and a spare chamber for a friend, all scantily furnished, sufficed for the modest wants of the owner of the property. If you wished to feast your eyes on luxury, you went to the stables. The stud farm being described, the introduction of Hardyman's sister follows in due course.

The Honorable Lavinia Hardyman was, as all persons in society knew, married rather late in life to General Drumblade. It is saying a great deal, but it is not saying too much, to describe Mrs. Drumblade as the most mischievous woman of her age in all England. Scandal was the breath of her life: to place people in false positions, to divulge secrets and destroy characters, to undermine friendships and aggravate enmities—these were the sources of enjoyment from which this dangerous woman drew the inexhaustible fund of good spirits that made her brilliant light in the social sphere. She was one of the privileged sinners of modern society. The worst mischief that she could work was ascribed to her "exuberant vitality." She had that ready familiarity of manner which is (in her class) so rarely discovered to be insolence in disguise. Her power of easy self-assertion found people ready to accept her on her own terms wherever she went. She was one of those big, overpowering women, with blunt manners, volatile tongues, andoggle eyes, who carry every thing before them. The highest society modestly considered itself in danger of being dull in the absence of Mrs. Drumblade. Even Hardyman himself—who saw as little of her as possible, whose frankly straightforward nature compelled by instinct from contact with his sister—could think of no fitter person to make Miss Pink's reception agreeable to her while he was devoting his own attentions to her niece. Mrs. Drumblade accepted the position thus offered with the most amiable readiness. In her own private mind she placed an interpretation on her brother's motives which did him the grossest injustice. She believed that Hardyman's designs on Isabel contemplated the most profligate result. To assist this purpose, while the girl's nearest relative was supposed to be taking care of her, was Mrs. Drumblade's idea of "fun." Her worst enemies ad-

nited that the Honorable Lavinia had redeeming qualities, and owned that a keen sense of humor was one of her merits.

Was Miss Pink a likely person to resist the fascinations of Mrs. Drumblade? Alas for the ex-school-mistress! before she had been five minutes at the farm, Hardyman's sister had fished for her, caught her, landed her. Poor Miss Pink!

Mrs. Drumblade could assume a grave dignity of manner when the occasion called for it. She was grave, she was dignified, when Hardyman performed the ceremonies of introduction. She would not say she was charmed to meet Miss Pink—the ordinary slang of society was not for Miss Pink's ears—she would say she felt this introduction as a privilege. It was so seldom one met with persons of trained intellect in society. Mrs. Drumblade was already informed of Miss Pink's earlier triumphs in the instruction of youth. Mrs. Drumblade had not been blessed with children herself; but she had nephews and nieces, and she was anxious about their education, especially the nieces. What a sweet, modest girl Miss Isabel was! The fondest wish she could form for her nieces would be that they should resemble Miss Isabel when they grew up. The question was as to the best method of education. She would own that she had selfish motives in becoming acquainted with Miss Pink. They were at the farm, no doubt, to see Alfred's horses. Mrs. Drumblade did not understand horses; her interest was in the question of education. She might even confess that she had accepted Alfred's invitation in the hope of hearing Miss Pink's views. There would be opportunities, she trusted, for a little instructive conversation on that subject. It was, perhaps, ridiculous to talk, at her age, of feeling as if she was Miss Pink's pupil, and yet it exactly expressed the nature of the aspiration which was then in her mind. In these terms, feeling her way with the utmost nicety, Mrs. Drumblade

had the art of flattery round and round Miss

Pink, until her hold on that innocent lady was, in every sense of the word, secure. Before half the horses had been passed under review, Hardyman and Isabel were out of sight, and Mrs. Drumblade and Miss Pink were lost in the intricacies of the stables.

"Excessively stupid of me! We had better go back, and establish ourselves comfortably in the parlor. When my brother misses us, he and your charming piece will return to look for us in the cottage." Under cover of this arrangement the separation became complete. Miss Pink held forth on education to Mrs. Drumblade in the parlor, while Hardyman and Isabel were on their way to a paddock at the farthest limits of the property.

"I am afraid you are getting a little tired," said Hardyman. "Won't you take my arm?"

Isabel was on her guard: she had not forgotten what Lady Lydiard had said to her. "No, thank you, Mr. Hardyman; I am a better walker than you think."

Hardyman continued the conversation in his blunt, resolute way. "I wonder whether you will believe me," he asked, "if I tell you that this is one of the happiest days of my life?"

"I should think you were always happy," Isabel cautiously replied, "having such a pretty place to live in as this."

Hardyman met that answer with one of his quietly positive denials. "A man is never happy by himself," he said. "He is happy with a companion. For instance, I am happy with you."

Isabel stopped and looked back. Hardyman's language was becoming a little too explicit. "Surely we have lost Mrs. Drumblade and my aunt?" she said. "I don't see them anywhere."

"You will see them directly; they are only a long way behind." With this assurance, he returned, in his own obstinate way, to his one object in view. "Miss Isabel, I want to ask you a question. I'm not a ladies' man. I speak my mind plainly to every body—women included. Do you like being here to-day?"

Isabel's gravity was not proof against this very downright question. "I should be hard to please," she said, laughing, "if I didn't enjoy my visit to the farm."

Hardyman pushed steadily forward through the obstacle of the farm to the question of the farm's master. "You like being here," he repeated. "Do you like me?"

This was serious. Isabel drew back a little and looked at him. He waited with the most impenetrable gravity for her reply.

"I think you can hardly expect me to answer that question," she said.

"Why not?"

"Our acquaintance has been a very short one, Mr. Hardyman. And if you are so good as to forget the difference between us, I think I ought to remember it."

"What difference?"

"The difference in rank."

Hardyman suddenly stood still, and emphasized his next words by digging his stick into the grass.

"If any thing I have said has vexed you," he began, "tell me so plainly, Miss Isabel, and I'll ask your pardon. But don't throw my rank in my face. I cut adrift from all that nonsense when I took a farm and got my living out of the horses. What has a man's rank to do with a man's feelings?" he went on, with another emphatic dig of his stick. "I am quite serious in asking if you like me, for this good reason, that I like you. Yes, I do. You remember that day when I bled the old lady's dog. Well, I have found out since then that there's a sort of incompleteness in my life which I never suspected before. It's you who have put that idea into my head. You didn't mean it, I dare say, but you have done it all the same. I sat alone here yesterday evening smoking my pipe—and I didn't enjoy it. I breakfasted alone this morning—and I didn't enjoy that. I said to myself, She's coming to lunch, that's one comfort—I shall enjoy lunch. That's what I feel, roughly described. I don't suppose I've

been five minutes together without thinking of you, now in one way and now in another, since the day when I first saw you. When a man comes to my time of life, and has had my experience, he knows what that means. It means, in plain English, that his heart is set on a woman. You're the woman."

Isabel had thus far made several attempts to interrupt him, without success. But when Hardyman's confession attained its culminating point, she insisted on being heard.

"If you will excuse me, Sir," she interposed, gravely, "I think I had better go back to the cottage. My aunt is a stranger here, and she doesn't know where to look for us."

"We don't want your aunt," Hardyman remarked, in his most positive manner.

"We do want her," Isabel rejoined. "I won't venture to say it's wrong in you, Mr. Hardyman, to talk to me as you have just done, but I am quite sure it's wrong in me to listen."

He looked at her with such unaffected surprise and distress that she stopped, on the point of leaving him, and tried to make herself better understood.

"I had no intention of offending you, Sir," she said, a little confusedly. "I only wanted to remind you that there are some things which a gentleman in your position—" She stopped, tried to finish the sentence, failed, and began another. "If I had been a young lady in your own rank of life," she went on, "I might have thanked you for paying me a compliment, and have given you a serious answer. As it is, I am afraid I must say that you have surprised and disappointed me. I can claim very little for myself, I know; but I did imagine—so long as there was nothing unbecoming in my conduct—that I had some right to your respect."

Listening more and more impatiently, Hardyman took her by the hand, and burst out with another of his abrupt questions.

"What can you possibly be thinking of?" he asked.

She gave him no answer; she only looked at him reproachfully, and tried to release herself.

Hardyman held her hand faster than ever.

"I believe you think me an infernal scoundrel," he said. "I can stand a good deal, Miss Isabel, but I can't stand that. How have I failed in respect toward you, if you please? I have told you you're the woman my heart is set on. Well? Isn't it plain what I want of you when I say that?"

Isabel's only reply to this extraordinary proposal of marriage was a faint cry of astonishment followed by a sudden trembling that shook her from head to foot.

Hardyman put his arm round her with a gentleness which his oldest friend would have been surprised to see in him.

"Take your time to think of it," he said, dropping back again into his usual quiet tone. "If you had known me a little better, you wouldn't have mistaken me, and you wouldn't be looking at me now as if you were afraid to believe your own ears. What is there so very wonderful in my wanting to marry you? I don't set up for being a saint. When I was a young man I was no better (and no worse) than other young men. I'm getting on now to middle life. I don't want romances and adventures; I want an easy existence with a nice lovable woman who will make me a good wife. You're the woman, I tell you again. I know it by what I've seen of you myself, and by what I have heard of you from Lady Lydiard. She said you were prudent and sweet-tempered and affectionate; to which I wish to add that you have just the face and figure that I like, and the modest manners and the blessed absence of all slang in your talk which I don't find in the young women I meet with in the present day. That's my view of it: I think for myself. What does it matter to me whether you're the daughter of a duke or the daughter of a dairyman? It isn't your father I want to marry; it's you. Listen to reason, there's a dear! We have only one question to settle before we go back to your aunt. You wouldn't answer me when I asked it a little while since. Will you answer now? Do you like me?"

Isabel looked up at him timidly.

"In my position, Sir," she asked, "have I any right to like you? What would your relations and friends think if I said Yes?"

Hardyman gave her waist a little admonitory squeeze with his arm.

"What! You're at it again? A nice way to answer a man, to call him 'Sir,' and to get behind his rank as if it was a place of refuge from him! I hate talking of myself, but you force me to it. Here is my position in the world: I have got an elder brother; he is married, and he has a son to succeed him in the title and the property. You understand, so far? Very well! Years ago I shifted my share of the rank (whatever it may be) on to my brother's shoulders. He's a thorough good fellow, and he has carried my dignity

for me, without once dropping it, ever since. As for what people may say, they have said it already, from my father and mother downward, in the time when I took to the horses and the farm.

If they're the wise people I take them for, they won't be at the trouble of saying it all over again. No, No. Twist it how you may, Miss Isabel, whether I'm single or whether I'm married, I'm plain Alfred Hardyman; and every body who knows me knows that I go on my own way, and please myself. If you don't like me, it will be the bitterest disappointment I ever had in my life; but say so honestly, all the same."

Where is the woman in Isabel's place whose capacity for resistance would not have yielded a little to such an appeal as this?

"I should be an insensible wretch," she replied, warmly, "if I didn't feel the honor you have done me, and feel it gratefully."

"Does that mean you will have me for a husband?" asked downright Hardyman.

She was fairly driven into a corner; but (being

a woman) she tried to slip through his fingers at the last moment.

"Will you forgive me," she said, "if I ask for a little more time? I am so bewildered, I hardly know what to say or do for the best. You see, Mr. Hardyman, it would be a dreadful thing for me to be the cause of your giving offense to your family. I am obliged to think of that. It would be so distressing for you (I will say nothing of myself) if your friends closed their doors on me. They might say I was a designing girl, who had taken advantage of your good opinion to raise herself in the world. Lady Lydiard warned me long since not to be ambitious about myself, and not to forget my station in life, because she treated me like her adopted daughter. Indeed—in fact, I can't tell you how I feel your goodness, and the compliment—the very great compliment—you pay me. My heart is free; and if I followed my own inclinations—" She checked herself, conscious that she was on the brink of saying too much. "Will you give me a few days?" she pleaded, "to try if I can think composedly of all this? I am only a girl, and I feel quite dazzled by the prospect that you set before me."

Hardyman seized on these words as offering all the encouragement that he desired to his suit.

"Have your own way in this thing, and in every thing!" he said, with an unaccustomed fervor of language and manner. "I am so glad to hear that your heart is open to me, and that all your inclinations take my part."

Isabel instantly protested against this misrepresentation of what she had really said. "Oh, Mr. Hardyman, you quite mistake me!"

He answered her very much as he had answered Lady Lydiard when she had tried to make him understand his proper relations toward Isabel.

"No; I don't mistake you. I agree to every word you say. How can I expect you to marry me, as you very properly remark, unless I give you a day or two to make up your mind? It's quite enough for me that you like the prospect.

If Lady Lydiard treated you as her daughter, why shouldn't you be my wife? It stands to reason that you're quite right to marry a man who can raise you in the world. I like you to be ambitious, though Heaven knows it isn't much I can do for you, except to love you with all my heart. Still, it's a great encouragement to hear that her ladyship's views agree with mine—"

"They don't agree, Mr. Hardyman," protested poor Isabel. "You are entirely misrepresenting—"

Hardyman cordially concurred in this view of the matter. "Yes! yes! I can't pretend to represent her ladyship's language, or yours either; I am obliged to take my words as they come to me. Don't disturb yourself: it's all right—I understand. You have made me the happiest man living. I shall ride over to-morrow to your aunt's house and bear what you have to say to me. Mind you're at home! Not a day must pass now without my seeing you. I do love you, Isabel—I do indeed!" He stooped and kissed her heartily. "Only to reward me," he explained, "for giving you time to think."

She drew herself away from him—resolutely, not angrily. Before she could make a third attempt to place the subject in its right light before him, the luncheon bell rang at the cottage, and a servant appeared, evidently sent to look for them.

"Don't forget to-morrow," Hardyman whispered, confidentially. "I'll call early, and then go on to London and get the ring."

CHAPTER XVII.

EVENTS succeeded each other rapidly after the memorable day to Isabel of the luncheon at the farm.

On the next day (the 9th of the month) Lady Lydiard sent for her steward, and requested him to explain his conduct in repeatedly leaving the house without assigning any reason for his absence. She did not dispute his claims to a freedom of action which would not be permitted to an ordinary servant. Her objection to his present course of proceeding related entirely to the mystery in which it was involved, and to the uncertainty in which the household was left as to the hour of his return. On those grounds, she thought herself entitled to an explanation. Moody's habitual reserve—strengthened on this occasion by his dread of ridicule if his efforts to serve Isabel ended in failure—disinclined him to take Lady Lydiard into his confidence while his inquiries were still beset with obstacles and doubts. He respectfully entreated her ladyship to grant him a delay of a few weeks before he entered on his explanation. Lady Lydiard's quick temper resented this request. She told Moody plainly that he was guilty of an act of presumption in making his own conditions with his employer. He received the reproof with exemplary resignation, but he held to his conditions nevertheless. From that moment the result of the interview was no longer in doubt. Moody was directed to send in his accounts. The accounts having been examined, and found to be scrupulously correct, he declined accepting the balance of salary that was offered to him. The next day he left Lady Lydiard's service.

On the 10th of the month her ladyship received a letter from her nephew.

The health of Felix had not improved. He had made up his mind to go abroad again toward the end of the month. In the mean time he had written to his friend at Paris, and he had the pleasure of forwarding an answer. The letter enclosed announced that the lost five-hundred-pound note had been made the subject of careful inquiry in Paris. It had not been traced. The French police offered to send to London one of their best men, well acquainted with the English language, if Lady Lydiard was desirous of employing him. He would be perfectly willing to act with an English officer in conducting the investigation, should it be thought necessary. Mr. Troy being consulted as to the expediency of accepting this proposal, objected to the pecuniary terms demanded

as being extravagantly high. He suggested waiting a little before any reply was sent to Paris; and he engaged meanwhile to consult a London solicitor who had great experience in cases of theft, and whose advice might enable them to dispense entirely with the services of the French police.

Being now a free man again, Moody was able to follow his own inclinations in regard to the instructions which he had received from Old Sharon.

The course that had been recommended to him was repellent to the self-respect and the sense of delicacy which were among the inbred virtues of Moody's character. He shrank from forcing himself as a friend on Hardyman's valet; he recollect from the idea of tempting the man to steal a specimen of his master's handwriting. After some consideration, he decided on applying to the agent who collected the rents at Hardyman's London chambers. Being an old acquaintance of Moody's, this person would certainly not hesitate to communicate the address of Hardyman's bankers, if he knew it. The experiment, tried under these favoring circumstances, proved perfectly successful. Moody proceeded to Sharon's lodgings the same day, with the address of the bankers in his pocket-book. The old vagabond, greatly amused by Moody's scruples, saw plainly enough that so long as he wrote the supposed letter from Hardyman in the third person, it mattered little what handwriting was employed, seeing that no signature would be necessary. The letter was at once composed, on the model which Sharon had already suggested to Moody, and a respectable messenger (so far as outward appearance went) was employed to take it to the bank. In half an hour the answer came back. It added one more to the difficulties which beset the inquiry after the lost money. No such sum as five hundred pounds had been paid, within the dates mentioned, to the credit of Hardyman's account.

Old Sharon was not in the least discomposed by this fresh check. "Give my love to the dear young lady," he said, with his customary impudence, "and tell her we are one degree nearer to finding the thief."

Moody looked at him, doubting whether he was in jest or in earnest.

"Must I squeeze a little more information into that thick head of yours?" asked Sharon. With this question he produced a weekly newspaper, and pointed to a paragraph which reported, among the items of sporting news, Hardyman's recent visit to a sale of horses at a town in the north of France. "We know he didn't pay the bank-note in to his account," Sharon remarked. "What else did he do with it? Took it to pay for the horses that he bought in France! Do you see your way a little plainer now? Very good. Let's try next what the money holds out. Somebody must cross the Channel in search of the note. Which of us two is to sit in the steamboat with a white basin on his lap? Old Sharon, of course." He stopped to count the money still left out of the sum deposited by Moody to defray the cost of the inquiry. "All right!" he went on. "I've got enough to pay my expenses there and back. Don't stir out of London till you hear from me. I can't tell how soon I may not want you. If there's any difficulty in tracing the note, your hand will have to go into your pocket again. Can't you get the lawyer to join you? Lord! how I should enjoy squandering his money! It's a downright disgrace to me to have only got one guinea out of him. I could tear my flesh off my bones when I think of it."

The same night Old Sharon started for France, by way of Dover and Calais.

Two days elapsed, and brought no news from Moody's agent. On the third day he received some information relating to Sharon—not from the man himself, but in a letter from Isabel Miller.

"For once, dear Robert" (she wrote), "my judgment has turned out to be sounder than yours. That hateful old man has confirmed my worst opinion of him. Pray have him punished. Take him before a magistrate and charge him with cheating you out of your money. I inclose the sealed letter which he gave me at the farm-house. The week's time before I was to open it expired yesterday. Was there ever any thing so impudent and so inhuman? I am too vexed and angry about the money you have wasted on this old wretch to write more."

"Yours, gratefully and affectionately,

"ISABEL."

The letter in which Old Sharon had undertaken (by way of pacifying Isabel) to write the name of the thief, contained these lines:

"You are a charming girl, my dear; but you still want one thing to make you perfect, and that is a lesson in patience. I am proud and happy to teach you. The name of the thief remains, for the present, Mr. —(Blank)."

From Moody's point of view, there was but one thing to be said of this: it was just like Old Sharon! Isabel's letter was of infinitely greater interest to him. He feasted his eyes on the words above the signature: she signed herself, "Yours, gratefully and affectionately." Did the last word mean that she was really beginning to be fond of him? After kissing the word, he wrote a comforting letter to her, in which he pledged himself to keep a watchful eye on Sharon, and to trust him with no more money until he had honestly earned it first.

A week passed. Moody (longing to see Isabel) still waited in vain for news from France. He had just decided to delay his visit to South Morden no longer, when the errand-boy employed by Sharon brought him this message: "The old 'un's at home, and waitin' to see yer."

CHAPTER XVIII.

SHARON's news was not of an encouraging character. He had met with serious difficulties, and had spent the last farthing of Moody's money in attempting to overcome them.

One discovery of importance he had certainly made. A horse withdrawn from the sale was the only horse that had met with Hardyman's approval. He had secured the animal at the high reserved price of twelve thousand francs—being four hundred and eighty pounds in francs money; and he had paid with an English bank-note. The seller (a French horse-dealer resident in Brussels) had returned to Belgium immediately on completing the negotiation. Sharon had ascertained his address, and had written to him at Brussels, inclosing the number of the lost bank-note. In two days he had received an answer informing him that the horse-dealer had been called to England by the illness of a relative, and that he had hitherto failed to send any address to which his letters could be forwarded. Hearing this, and having exhausted his funds, Sharon had returned to London. It now rested with Moody to decide whether the course of the inquiry should follow the horse-dealer next. There was the cash-account, showing how the money had been spent. And there was Sharon, with his pipe in his mouth and his dog on his lap, waiting for orders.

Moody wisely took time to consider before he committed himself to a decision. In the mean while he ventured to recommend a new course of proceeding which Sharon's report had suggested to his mind.

"It seems to me," he said, "that we have taken the roundabout way of getting to our end in view, when the straight road lay before us. If Mr. Hardyman has passed the stolen note, you know as well as I do that he has passed it innocently. Instead of wasting time and money in trying to trace a stranger, why not tell Mr. Hardyman what has happened, and ask him to give us the number of the note? You can't think of every thing, I know; but it does seem strange that this idea didn't occur to you before you went to France."

"Mr. Moody," said Old Sharon, "I shall have to cut your acquaintance. You are a man without faith; I don't like you. As if I hadn't thought of Hardyman weeks since!" he exclaimed, contemptuously. "Are you really soft enough to suppose that a gentleman in his position would talk about his money affairs to me? You know mighty little of him if you do. A fortnight since I sent one of my men (most respectably dressed) to hang about his farm, and see what information he could pick up. My man became painfully acquainted with the toe of a boot. It was thick, Sir; and it was Hardyman's."

"I will run the risk of the boot," Moody replied, in his quiet way.

"And put the question to Hardyman?"

"Yes."

"Very good," said Sharon. "If you get your answer from his tongue instead of his boot, the case is at an end—unless I have made a complete mess of it. Look here, Moody! If you want to do me a good turn, tell the lawyer that the guinea opinion was the right one. Let him know that he was the fool, not you, when he buttoned up his pockets and refused to trust me. And, I say!" pursued Old Sharon, relapsing into his customary impudence, "you're in love, you know, with that nice girl. I like her myself. When you marry her, invite me to the wedding. I'll make a sacrifice: I'll brush my hair and wash my face in honor of the occasion."

Returning to his lodgings, Moody found two letters waiting on the table. One of them bore the South Morden postmark. He opened that letter first.

It was written by Miss Pink. The first lines contained an urgent entreaty to keep the circumstances connected with the loss of the five hundred pounds the strictest secret from every one in general, and from Hardyman in particular. The reasons assigned for making the strange request were next expressed in these terms: "My niece Isabel is, I am happy to inform you, engaged to be married to Mr. Hardyman. If the slightest hint reached him of her having been associated, no matter how cruelly and unjustly, with a suspicion of theft, the marriage would be broken off, and the result to herself and to every body connected with her would be disgrace for the rest of our lives."

On the blank space at the foot of the page a few words were added in Isabel's writing: "Whatever changes there may be in my life, your place in my heart is one that no other person can fill: it is the place of my dearest friend. Pray write and tell me that you are not distressed and not angry. My one anxiety is that you should remember what I have always told you about the state of my own feelings. My one wish is that you will still let me love you and value you as I might have loved and valued a brother."

The letter dropped from Moody's hand. Not a word, not even a sigh, passed his lips. In tearless silence he submitted to the pang that wrung him—in tearless silence he contemplated the wreck of his life.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE narrative returns to South Morden, and follows the events which attended Isabel's marriage engagement.

To say that Miss Pink, inflamed by triumph, rose, morally speaking, from the earth, and floated among the clouds, is to indicate faintly the effect produced on the ex-school-mistress when her niece first informed her of what had happened at the farm. Attacked on one side by her aunt and on the other by Hardyman, and feebly defended, at the best, by her own doubts and misgivings, Isabel ended in surrendering at discretion. Like thousands of other women in a similar position, she was in the last degree uncertain as to the state of her own heart. To what extent she was insensibly influenced by Hardyman's commanding position, in believing herself to be sincerely attached to him, it was beyond her power of self-examination to discover.

He doubly dazzled her by his birth and by his celebrity. Not in England only, but throughout Europe, he was a recognized authority on his own subject. How could she—how could any woman—resist the influence of his steady mind, his firmness of purpose, his manly resolution to owe every thing to himself and nothing to his rank, set off as these attractive qualities were by the outward and personal advantages which exercise an ascendancy of their own? Isabel was fascinated, and yet Isabel was not at ease. In her lonely moments she was troubled by regretful thoughts of Moody, which perplexed and irritated her. She had always behaved honestly to him; she had never encouraged him to hope that his love for her had the faintest prospect of being returned. Yet, knowing as she did that her conduct was blameless so far, there were nevertheless perverse sympathies in her which took his part. In the wakeful hours of the night there were whispering voices in her which said, Think of Moody! Had there been a growing kindness toward this good friend in her heart of which she was herself not aware? She tried to detect it—to weigh it for what it was really worth. But it lay too deep to be discovered and estimated, if it did really exist—if it had any sounder origin than her own morbid fancy. In the broad light of day, in the little bustling duties of life, she forgot it again. She could think of what she ought to wear on the wedding day; she could even try privately how her new signature, "Isabel Hardyman," would look when she had the right to use it.

On the whole, it may be said that the time passed smoothly, with some occasional checks and drawbacks, which were the more easily endured seeing that they took their rise in Isabel's own conduct. Compliant as she was in general, there were two instances, among others, in which her resolution to take her own way was not to be overcome. She refused to write either to Moody or to Lady Lydiard informing them of her engagement; and she steadily disapproved of Miss Pink's policy of concealment in the matter of the robbery at Lady Lydiard's house. Her aunt could only secure her as a passive accomplice by stating family considerations in the strongest possible terms. "If the disgrace was confined to you, my dear, I might leave you to decide. But I am involved in it, as your nearest relative; and what is more, even the sacred memories of your father and mother might feel the slur cast on them." This exaggerated language—like all exaggerated language, a mischievous weapon in the arsenal of weakness and prejudice—had its effect on Isabel. Reluctantly and sadly she consented to be silent.

Miss Pink wrote word of the engagement to Moody first, reserving to a later day the superior pleasure of informing Lady Lydiard of the very event which that audacious woman had declared to be impossible. To her aunt's surprise, just as she was about to close the envelope, Isabel stepped forward, and inconsistently requested leave to add a postscript to the very letter which she had refused to write! Miss Pink was not even permitted to see the postscript. Isabel secured the envelope the moment she laid down her pen, and retired to her room with a headache (which was heart-ache in disguise) for the rest of the day.

While the question of the marriage was still in debate, an event occurred which exercised a serious influence on Hardyman's future plans.

He received a letter from the Continent which claimed his immediate attention. One of the sovereigns of Europe had decided on making some radical changes in the mounting and equipment of a cavalry regiment, and he required the assistance of Hardyman in that important part of the contemplated reform which was connected with the choice and purchase of horses. Setting his own interests out of the question, Hardyman owed obligations to the kindness of his illustrious correspondent which made it impossible for him to send an excuse. In a fortnight's time, at the latest, it would be necessary for him to leave England, and a month or more might elapse before it would be possible for him to return.

Under these circumstances, he proposed, in his own precipitate way, to hasten the date of the marriage. The necessary legal delay would permit the ceremony to be performed on that day fortnight. Isabel might then accompany him on his journey, and spend a brilliant honey-moon at the foreign court. She at once refused not only to accept this proposal, but even to take it into consideration. While Miss Pink dwelt eloquently on the shortness of the notice, Miss Pink's niece based her resolution on far more important grounds. Hardyman had not yet announced the contemplated marriage to his parents and friends, and Isabel was determined not to become his wife until she could be first assured of a courteous and tolerant reception by the family, if she could hope for no warmer welcome at their hands.

Hardyman was not a man who yielded easily, even in trifles. In the present case his dearest interests were concerned in inducing Isabel to reconsider her decision. He was still vainly trying to shake her resolution, when the afternoon post brought a letter for Miss Pink, which introduced a new element of disturbance into the discussion. The letter was nothing less than Lady Lydiard's reply to the written announcement of Isabel's engagement, dispatched on the previous day by Miss Pink.

Her ladyship's answer was a surprisingly short one. It only contained these lines:

"Lady Lydiard begs to acknowledge the receipt of Miss Pink's letter requesting that she will say nothing to Mr. Hardyman of the loss of a bank-note in her house, and assigning as a reason that Miss Isabel Miller is engaged to be married to Mr. Hardyman, and might be prejudiced in his estimation if the facts were made known. Miss Pink may make her mind easy. Lady Lydiard has not the slightest intention of taking Mr. Hardyman into her confidence on the subject of

her domestic affairs. With regard to the proposed marriage, Lady Lydiard casts no doubt on Miss Pink's perfect sincerity and good faith; but, at the same time, she positively declines to believe that Mr. Hardyman means to make Miss Isabel Miller his wife. Lady L. will yield to the evidence of a properly attested certificate—and to nothing else."

A folded piece of paper, directed to Isabel, dropped out of this characteristic letter as Miss Pink turned from the first page to the second. Lady Lydiard addressed her adopted daughter in these words:

"I was on the point of leaving home to visit you again, when I received your aunt's letter. My poor deluded child, no words can tell how distressed I am about you. You are already sacrificed to the folly of the most foolish woman living. For God's sake, take care you do not fall a victim next to the designs of a profligate man! Come to me instantly, Isabel, and I promise to take care of you."

Fortified by these letters, and aided by Miss Pink's indignation, Hardyman pressed his proposal on Isabel with renewed resolution. She made no attempt to combat his arguments—she only held firmly by her decision. Without some encouragement from Hardyman's father and mother, she still steadily refused to become his wife. Irritated already by Lady Lydiard's letters, he lost the self-command which so eminently distinguished him in the ordinary affairs of life, and showed the domineering and despotic temper which was an inbred part of his disposition. Isabel's high spirit at once resented the harsh terms in which he spoke to her. In the plainest words she released him from his engagement, and, without waiting for his excuses, quitted the room.

Left together, Hardyman and Miss Pink devised an arrangement which paid due respect to Isabel's scruples, and at the same time met Lady Lydiard's insulting assertion of disbelief in Hardyman's honor, by a formal and public announcement of the marriage.

It was proposed to give a garden party at the farm in a week's time, for the express purpose of introducing Isabel to Hardyman's family and friends in the character of his betrothed wife. If his father and mother accepted the invitation, Isabel's only objection to hastening their union would fall to the ground. Hardyman might, in that case, plead with his imperial correspondent for a delay in his departure of a few days more; and the marriage might still take place before he left England. Isabel, at Miss Pink's intercession, was induced to accept her lover's excuses, and, in the event of her favorable reception by Hardyman's parents at the farm, to give her consent (not very willingly even yet) to hastening the ceremony which was to make her Hardyman's wife.

On the next morning the whole of the invitations were sent out, excepting the invitation to Hardyman's father and mother. Without mentioning it to Isabel, Hardyman decided on personally appealing to his mother before he ventured on taking the head of the family into his confidence.

The result of the interview was partially successful—and no more. Lord Rotherfield declined to see his youngest son; and he had engagements which would, under any circumstances, prevent his being present at the garden party. But, at the express request of Lady Rotherfield, he was willing to make certain concessions.

"I have always regarded Alfred as a barely sane person," said his lordship, "since he turned his back on his prospects to become a horse-dealer. If we decline altogether to sanction this new act—I won't say of insanity, I will say of absurdity—on his part, it is impossible to predict what discreditable extremities he may not proceed. We must temporize with Alfred. In the mean time I shall endeavor to obtain some information respecting this young person—named Miller, I think you said, and now resident at South Morden. If I am satisfied that she is a woman of reputable character, possessing an average education and presentable manners, we may as well let Alfred take his own way. He is

out of the pale of Society, as it is; and Miss Miller has no father and mother to complicate matters, which is distinctly a merit on her part—and, in short, if the marriage is not absolutely disgraceful, the wisest way (as we have no power to prevent it) will be to submit. You will say nothing to Alfred about what I propose to do. I tell you plainly I don't trust him. You will simply inform him from me that I want time to consider, and that, unless he hears to the contrary in the interval, he may expect to have the sanction of your presence at his breakfast, or luncheon, or whatever it is. I must go to town in a day or two, and I shall ascertain what Alfred's friends know about this last of his many follies, if I meet any of them at the club."

Returning to South Morden in no serene frame of mind, Hardyman found Isabel in a state of depression which perplexed and alarmed him.

The news that his mother might be expected to be present at the garden party failed entirely to raise her spirits. The only explanation she gave of the change in her was that the dull heavy weather of the last few days made her feel a little languid and nervous. Naturally dissatisfied with this reply to his inquiries, Hardyman asked for Miss Pink. He was informed that Miss Pink could not see him. She was constitutionally subject to asthma, and having warnings of a return of the malady, she was (by the doctor's advice) keeping her room. Hardyman returned to the farm in a temper which was felt by every body in his employment, from the trainer to the stable-boys.

While the apology made for Miss Pink stated no more than the plain truth, it must be confessed that Hardyman was right in declining to be satisfied with Isabel's excuse for the melancholy that oppressed her. She had that morning received Moody's answer to the lines which she had addressed to him at the end of her aunt's letter, and she had not yet recovered from the effect which it had produced on her spirits.

"It is impossible for me to say honestly that I am not distressed" (Moody wrote) "by the news of your marriage engagement. The blow has fallen very heavily on me. When I look at the future now, I see only a dreary blank. This is not your fault; you are in no way to blame. I remember the time when I should have been too angry to own this—when I might have said or done things which I should have bitterly regretted afterward. That time is past. My temper has been softened since I have befriended you in your troubles. That good at least has come out of my foolish hopes, and perhaps also out of the true sympathy which I have felt for you. I can honestly ask you to accept my heart's dearest wishes for your happiness, and I can keep the rest to myself."

"Let me say a word now relating to the efforts that I have made to help you since that sad day when you left Lady Lydiard's house."

"I had hoped (for reasons which it is needless to mention here) to interest Mr. Hardyman himself in aiding our inquiry. But your aunt's wishes, as expressed in her letter to me, close my lips. I will only ask you, at some convenient time, to let me mention the last discoveries that we have made; leaving it to your discretion, when Mr. Hardyman has become your husband, to ask him the questions which, under other circumstances, I should have put to him myself."

"It is, of course, possible that the view I take of Mr. Hardyman's capacity to help us may be a mistaken one. In this case, if you still wish the investigation to be privately carried on, I beg of you to let me continue to direct it, as the greatest favor you can confer on your devoted old friend."

"You need be under no apprehension about the expense to which you are likely to put me. I have unexpectedly inherited what is to me a handsome fortune."

"The same post which brought your aunt's letter brought a line from a lawyer asking me to see him on the subject of my late father's affairs. I waited a day or two before I could summon heart enough to see him, or to see any body; and then I went to his office. You have heard that my father's bank stopped payment, at a time of

commercial panic. His failure was mainly attributable to the treachery of a friend to whom he had lent a large sum of money, and who paid him the yearly interest without acknowledging that every farthing of it had been lost in unsuccessful speculations. The son of this man has prospered in business, and he has honorably devoted a part of his wealth to the payment of his father's creditors. Half the sum due to my father has thus passed into my hands as his next of kin, and the other half is to follow in course of time. If my hopes had been fulfilled, how gladly I should have shared my prosperity with you! As it is, I have far more than enough for my wants as a lonely man, and plenty left to spend in your service."

"God bless and prosper you, my dear. I shall ask you to accept a little present from me, among the other offerings that are made to you before the wedding day." R. M."

The studiously considerate and delicate tone in which these lines were written had an effect on Isabel which was exactly the opposite of the effect intended by the writer. She burst into a passionate fit of tears, and in the safe solitude of her own room, the despairing words escaped her, "I wish I had died before I met with Alfred Hardyman!"

As the days wore on, disappointments and difficulties seemed by a kind of fatality to beset the contemplated announcement of the marriage.

Miss Pink's asthma, developed by the unfavorable weather, set the doctor's art at defiance, and threatened to keep that unfortunate lady a prisoner in her room on the day of the party. Hardyman's invitations were in some cases refused, and in others accepted by husbands, with excuses for the absence of their wives. His elder brother made an apology for himself as well as for his wife. Felix Sweetsir wrote, "With pleasure, dear Alfred, if my health permits me to leave the house." Lady Lydiard, invited at Miss Pink's special request, sent no reply. The one encouraging circumstance was the silence of Lady Rotherfield. So long as her son received no intimation to the contrary, it was a sign that Lord Rotherfield permitted his wife to sanction the marriage by her presence.

Hardyman wrote to his imperial correspondent, engaging to leave England on the earliest possible day, and asking to be pardoned if he failed to express himself more definitely, in consideration of domestic affairs which it was necessary to settle before he started for the Continent. If there should not be time enough to write again, he promised to send a telegraphic announcement of his departure. Long afterward Hardyman remembered the misgivings that had troubled him when he wrote that letter. In the rough draft of it he had mentioned, as his excuse for not being yet certain of his own movements, that he expected to be immediately married. In the fair copy, the vague foreboding of some accident to come was so painfully present to his mind, that he struck out the words which referred to his marriage and substituted the designately indefinite phrase, "domestic affairs."

"You mentioned Mr. Hardyman's garden party, my lady, when I had the honor of waiting on you," Moody answered. "Thinking over it afterward, it seemed the fittest occasion I could find for making a little wedding present to Miss Isabel. Is there any harm in my asking Mr. Hardyman to let me put the present on her plate, so that she may see it when she sits down to luncheon? If your ladyship thinks so, I will go away directly, and send the gift by post."

Lady Lydiard looked at him attentively. "You don't despise the girl," she asked, "for selling herself for rank and money? Do I, do I, can tell you."

Moody's worn white face flushed a little. "No, my lady," he answered, "I can't hear you say that. Isabel would not have engaged herself to Mr. Hardyman unless she had been fond of him—as fond, I dare say, as I once hoped she might be of me. It's a hard thing to confess that; but I do confess it, in justice to her—God bless her!"

The generosity that spoke in those simple words touched the finest sympathies in Lady Lydiard's nature. "Give me your hand," she said, with her own generous spirit kindling in her eyes. "You have a great heart, Moody. Isabel Miller is a fool for not marrying you—and one day she will know it."

Before a word more could pass between them, Hardyman's voice was audible on the other side of the shrubbery, calling irritably to his servant to find Lady Lydiard.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

common politeness. The worry of giving this party is not to be told in words. I almost wish I had been content with presenting you to my mother, and had let the rest of my acquaintance go to the devil."

A quiet half hour passed, and the first visitor, a stranger to the servants, appeared at the cottage gate. He was a middle-aged man, and he had no wish to disturb Mr. Hardyman. "I will wait in the grounds," he said, "and trouble nobody." The middle-aged man who expressed himself in these modest terms was Robert Moody.

Five minutes later, a carriage drove up to the gate. An elderly lady got out of it, followed by a fat white Scotch terrier that growled at every stranger within his reach. It is needless to introduce Lady Lydiard and Tommie.

Informed that Mr. Hardyman was at the stables, Lady Lydiard gave the servant her card. "Take that to your master, and say I won't detain him five minutes." With these words, her ladyship sauntered into the grounds. She looked about her with observant eyes; not only noticing the tent which had been set up on the grass to accommodate the expected guests, but entering it, and looking at the waiters who were engaged in placing the luncheon on the table. Returning to the outer world, she next remarked that Mr. Hardyman's lawn was in very bad order. Barren sun-dried patches, and little holes and crevices opened here and there by the action of the summer heat, announced that the lawn, like everything else at the farm, had been neglected in the exclusive attention paid to the claims of the horses. Reaching a shrubbery which bounded one side of the grounds next, her ladyship became aware of a man slowly approaching her, to all appearance absorbed in thought. The man drew a little nearer. She lifted her glasses to her eyes, and recognized—Moody.

No embarrassment was produced on either side by this unexpected meeting. Lady Lydiard had, not long since, sent to ask her former steward to visit her, regretting, in her warm-hearted way, the terms on which they had separated, and wishing to atone for the harsh language that had escaped her at their parting interview. In the friendly talk which followed the reconciliation, Lady Lydiard not only heard the news of Moody's pecuniary inheritance, but, noticing the change in his appearance for the worse, conceived to extract from him the confession of his ill-starred passion for Isabel. To discover him now, after all that he had acknowledged, walking about the grounds at Hardyman's farm, took her ladyship completely by surprise. "Good heavens!" she exclaimed, in her loudest tones, "what are you doing here?"

"You mentioned Mr. Hardyman's garden party, my lady, when I had the honor of waiting on you," Moody answered. "Thinking over it afterward, it seemed the fittest occasion I could find for making a little wedding present to Miss Isabel. Is there any harm in my asking Mr. Hardyman to let me put the present on her plate, so that she may see it when she sits down to luncheon? If your ladyship thinks so, I will go away directly, and send the gift by post."

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OUGHT WE TO VISIT HER?

BY MRS. EDWARDS, Author of "Susan Fielding," "Archio Lovell," etc.
The Galaxy. A Magazine of Entertaining Reading (1866-1878); Jan 1872; XIII, 1; ProQuest
pg. 94

OUGHT WE TO VISIT HIER?

By Mrs. EDWARDS, Author of "Susan Fielding," "Archio Lovell," etc.

CHAPTER XL.

GOOD-BY FOREVER.

YEAR another "sin worth sinning," another dance worth dancing, is Rawdon Crosbie fated to enjoy in this life.

Jane walks up to his side, without the Duke of Malta, and asks for it herself, just as he is standing, jealous, miserable, undecided whether he shall invite the least musical of the Miss Pippins for the ensuing waltz, or rush away from everybody, smoke a pipe of despair in the starlight, then return to his hotel, and have done with ladies and ladies' society forever! "Can I have the honor of this waltz, Mr. Crosbie? It seems I may wait forever if I wait until your highness will condescend to ask me."

She looks beautiful, almost startlingly beautiful, as she speaks—her lips smiling (Jane knows a good deal about that smiling art; before the footlights has she not seen ballet-girls practise it in the face of the most atrocious bodily tortures?—here, on the stage of life, with adverse eyes, not those of a friendly public, watching her, shall she not show front as brave?) the hectic of her cheeks contrasting vividly with the marble of her round young neck and arms, her blue eyes all aglow with feverish light.

Rawdon looks at her like one who dreams; looks at her with a mingling of feelings that I find it hard to describe in words. She is nothing to him, and yet as she stands here at his side smiling into his face, and speaking to him with that voice of hers, she is everything. The past that has been Francis Theobald's, the future that may be, Rawdon does not ask himself what, matter nothing. He, he alone in the world possesses the present moment, and will make the most of it. A man going to execution might surely drink with zest a draught of rarest wine offered him by some pitying hand on his road.

She takes his arm, they stand for a minute or two in silence, and then the music begins and they start. If Rawdon lives

to be an old man, surely the keen pain—the keenest enjoyment of the next five minutes must remain no dry mental record, but a warm and living sensation in his memory. As the waltz proceeds he goes again through every scene of their brief friendship. He remembers the first look Jane gave him on the promenade at Spa, the ball and the Grande Duchesse waltzes, the walk home in the perfumed summer moonlight, their supper beside the window, the ineffaceable picture of her as she stood, the half-dead roses in her hair, smiling good-by to him in the early morning on the staircase. He remembers the day of the Liddington Flower Show, his jealousy, their walk—that for him might have been in Arcadia—among the flowers, and how they laughed and jested in the level sunlight; and the hours alone together in the silent garden of Theobalds; and the night at the Prince of Wales's, and the "sermon by gaslight" on the pavement of Maddox street.

And now all is over.

Just as unmistakably as a dying man knows that he is dying, Rawdon Crosbie knows that his ill-starred passion, with all it has given and all it has taken away, is in its death agony. He is drinking the last dregs of the poison-cup, and the poison tastes like nectar to the last.

When the waltz finishes Jane declares herself tired, and instead of walking about the room on Rawdon's arm, takes possession of the first vacant chair that comes to hand, Rawdon placing himself at her side.

They are, as it chances, exactly opposite poor Emmy, who, partnerless during the last dance, is sitting in the same place where Adonis left her some quarter of an hour ago.

"Rawdon," cries Jane, apropos of nothing, and turning her eyes full upon the lad's face, "that waltz was our good-bye. Did you know it? Not the cut eternal, but good-bye all the same. Well, when people go away they sometimes ask a favor of the friend they leave, don't they? I want to ask a favor of you."

"Going away!" repeats Rawdon blank-

ly. "And are you going away, Mrs. Theobald? Are you going to leave Chalkshire?"

"Yes, I'm going to leave Chalkshire. There was no great love between us from the beginning"—Jane has never read Shakespeare, but she has got a little stock of her own of stage quotations,—"There was no great love between us from the beginning, and it has pleased God to decrease it on further acquaintance. Chalkshire air doesn't agree with me, so I'm going"—a quiver, as though some spasm of pain had seized her, contracts her lips—"I'm going to have a change from it. Well, that is not what I wanted to talk to you about. If I ask a favor of you, my dear boy, will you promise beforehand to grant it? You'll never repent it if you do. Rawdon, I haven't much good left in me, I know, but I'm not quite so vile as to want to hurt you. Will you promise?"

"Most faithfully," says Rawdon Crosbie without a second's hesitation. "You should know that pretty well, I think, without going through the form of asking."

"Go this moment—no, not this moment, I want you for a little while longer, but go, the moment you leave me, to Miss Marsland and try once more to set things straight, ask her once more to forgive you. She will not say 'No' to-night, I'll answer for that."

Rawdon Crosbie turns white to the very lips. "This—this is the last thing I should have expected you to ask me, Mrs. Theobald."

"No doubt of it," says Jane quietly. "But everything that is least to be expected is happening to-night. Did you see me dance my lancers, Mr. Crosbie? I was in the same set with Lady Laurie and a Miss Archdeacon and your mamma. And the set did not melt away like the first one I tried with Dolly Standish, and the ladies all gave me the tips of their fingers and mannged not to faint. I have learned a lesson by that, Rawdon, my dear. If one would rough-ride the prejudices of good English society, one must have a Duke of Malta, not a Dolly Standish, for one's partner."

She laughs rather loudly. Emma Marsland across the room can hear her. But it is a laugh from which all the old merriment, all the hearty ring which once

made Jane's laughter so good a thing to listen to, has fled.

"And so, remembering the lancers, I think we may say that everything least likely to happen is happening to-night. Rawdon"—after a second or two—"some day or another, a long time hence it may be, just one more thing I should be glad for you to do. But you needn't promise about this; do it only if it seems good to you. Some day or other, then, when you are a steady old married man, and when you are talking to your wife about the past, I should like you to say to her that before I left Chalkshire I, Jane Theobald, wished her happiness, and that if I ever gave her pain I was sorry for it. Do you hear?"

"I hear," answers Rawdon very low, and not once raising his eyes to Jane's face.

"And, without my making any fine-company speeches, my dear boy, you must take for granted all the good things I wish you. The only happy hours I ever had in Chalkshire were the hours I spent with you. I shall like, whatever becomes of me, to look back to them and to remember how pluckily you used to stand my friend. And now," she goes on a little hastily, "I don't know that there's anything more for us to talk about. Good-by forever is a nasty thing to say, Rawdon, so we won't say it. We won't think that our good-by forever is really being spoken just at this moment."

"And I shall never feel that it has been spoken at all," says Rawdon stoutly. "As long as you live and I live, Mrs. Theobald, I shall never feel that we have wished each other a last good-by."

"You think so now. The day will come—yes, Rawdon, yes, the future is uncertain; impossible to say how any of us may turn out in the future—but the day will come, depend upon it, when you'll thank your stars good-by forever was said between you and me, and then—oh, heaven, whatever we do, don't let us get lachrymose and sentimental!" With a sort of start Jane interrupts herself thus. Almost within ear-shot, does not the Duke of Malta stand watching her? "You'll want all that kind of sugary material, you know, child, for the grand reconciliation scene in which you and Miss Marsland are coming on. It won't be a

very hard scene to act, take my word for it. People seldom fail in pleading when they really want to be pardoned. The question is, how am I, outside in the cold, to know that the pardon is spoken?"

She pauses for a minute, then selects a white moss rosebud from the flowers she holds in her hand, and gives it to him.

"Here, take this, Rawdon—I have excellent eyes, I shall see it wherever I may be in the room—and wear it until the moment when your sweetheart says 'Yes.' Then I, outside in the cold, must have my sign, and the sign shall be that you pull out my flower, my last gift, alas! from your buttonhole, and in the agitation of your feelings let it drop, accidentally of course, at your sweetheart's feet. You promise?"

Before Rawdon has time to answer, the Duke of Malta advances to claim her—with such an expression of assured success, such a flush of triumph upon his vacuous Beaudesert face! Jane rises, takes his arm with a curious, half-sullen air of submission, then turns once more to Rawdon Crosbie.

"You promise me?" she repeats in a whisper. "I shall feel—well, the only pleasure anything could give me to-night when I receive my sign."

And he promises. They are the last words ever spoken between them. Upon the Duke of Malta's arm Jane passes away among the crowd of dancers; and in another minute Rawdon Crosbie has taken the vacant chair by Emma Marsland's side.

In a poem or a play, men, at all stirring moments of the plot, express their feelings, I remark, in language artistically adequate to the occasion. In every-day commonplace reality, they talk every-day commonplace still; plead for their mistress's lost favor much in the same strain and tone as they would ask her to pass them the toast at breakfast; only that in asking for the toast their utterance might be more natural, and therefore more expressive.

"What! not dancing, Emmy?" This is the observation with which Rawdon, his heart really torn by conflicting emotions, begins the scene that he knows must, one way or another, govern the course of his whole future life.

"No, I'm not dancing this time," says Emma. "I've danced as much as I wish to dance this evening."

"It's getting awfully hot; don't you think so?"

"Yes; but if the windows are open on both sides there is such a draught. It's better to be too hot than to sit in a draught."

"Well, perhaps it is. You won't give me another dance to-night, I suppose, Emmy?"

"Yes, Rawdon, I will, if you wish for me."

"I did not like to ask you sooner. I thought Adonis was sure to have filled all the vacant places in your programme."

"Poor dear Adonis!" What woman can speak of the man she has refused without some slight inflection of voice betraying his secret? "Adonis does not dance round dances, you know."

"And you will dance this galop with me, then?"

"I shall be very happy."

But neither of them rises, and both keep their eyes fixed rigidly straight before them, as people do who are conscious that they are not saying what they would like to say if they dared, and knew how.

"Mrs. Theobald is looking very well to-night," remarks Emma, breaking the ice at last. "I mean well as far as looks go. I—I'm sorry for her, Rawdon." Timidly poor Emmy volunteers this, her first concession. "People are saying that Mr. Theobald has gone away and left her, and there's such a wretched look on her face all the time she is laughing and talking with the Duke."

"You could hardly expect a woman in her position, alone in a room full of people who have shunned and blackballed her, to look very jolly," answers Rawdon.

"If I had to act the last few weeks over again, I know that I, for one, would behave very differently toward Mrs. Theobald; but it's no use looking back now. The past is past, and done with!" And Emma gives a melancholy sigh as she thinks of the lovely wedding-dresses from Miss Fletcher's, the orange blossoms, the Honiton veil (tried on in strictest confidence before one's eight bridesmaids), all locked away painfully spotless, drearily intact, in the bran-new portmanteau and travelling cases that were to have accompanied Mr. and Mrs. Rawdon Crosbie upon their wedding tour.

"Is the past done with?" exclaims Rawdon. "Emma," and his voice trem-

bles, "is the past, the time when we loved and trusted each other so well, gone by forever between you and me?"

"Oh, Rawdon—oh, don't—oh, what would mamma think?—oh, I know the Pippins are looking!" cries Emma, her heart swelling with a sudden rapturous hope.

"I have been to blame in every way—a fool! I deserved to lose you, I don't deserve your forgiveness, but—I ask it! Emma, thinking of yourself, and of your own happiness alone, not of any suffering your answer might cost me, is it possible you can say you pardon me? is it possible there is room for me in your affection yet?"

And now comes to Rawdon Crosbie the most strangely-blent moment conceivable of pleasure and of pain. For Emma, such honest love, such tender womanly forgiveness upon her face as makes her more than pretty, falters "Yes," and Jane standing outside in the cold—just opposite the lovers, that is to say, flushed and radiant, on the Duke of Maltz's arm—must have her sign!

He takes the flower, as she bade him, from his buttonhole and holds it irresolutely.

"How odious I used to be about your bits of flowers, your withered weeds," cries Emma presently; poor Emma, who feels in her immense new-born happiness that she can never blame herself enough for the jealousy through which that happiness was so nearly wrecked! "I'm wiser now, Rawdon; I ask no impudent questions about your white rosebud, although I can form a pretty shrewd guess who gave it you. Your buttonhole was without adornment, sir, when we danced that miserable dance together at the beginning of the evening."

"I have danced with Lydia Pippin, Augusta Brown—with I don't know how many charming creatures since," says Rawdon.

And Emma seems contented. Just at this moment up comes Sir John Laurie to ask her for the following quadrille, the last square dance of the evening. Even in the first rose flush of enraptured love, Emma cannot resist the honor of dancing with the county member; and as the good old gentleman, spectacles on nose, stands writing his name down on her programme, Rawdon gets an oppor-

tunity, unobserved, for giving Jane her sign.

In a crowded ballroom, everybody Argus-eyed, watching everybody else's affairs, 'tis wonderful how little is known, really, of what goes on among the different actors. Rawdon Crosbie is evidently trying to patch things up, wise young man, with the heiress, in Major Hervey's absence. That all the world has been observing during the past five minutes. Who should notice such a trivial action as his raising a morsel of half-dead flower to his lips, holding it to them with a great tenderness for a second or two, then—his sunburnt, unsentimental face becoming livid the while—laying it gently down on the floor just beside the hem of Miss Marsland's ball dress, and letting it rest there! Who, I say, should notice such unimportant nonsense as all this?

"I'm sure I didn't want any other partner than you to-night," says Emma, turning to her lover. "But one couldn't refuse Sir John—say, Rawdon, could one?"

"Perfectly impossible, my dear Emma. Now the right thing, I suppose, for me is to solicit the honor of fat old Lady Laurie's hand and be your vis-à-vis?"

"I hope you are not beginning to laugh at me already, Rawdon?"

"Do I look in such a very laughing mood then, Emma?"

And Emma after glancing at his face is forced to confess a little bitterly that he does not. Rawdon Crosbie, as I have before remarked, is no expert in the art of feigning emotion.

When the waltz is over, Mrs. Theobald begins to walk about on the Duke's arm; after a time, accidentally or otherwise, passes close to the lovers as they stand talking to Mrs. Crosbie at the upper end of the room. She gives Rawdon a furtive smile of congratulation that with all its kindness cuts him to the heart. Then, Emma chancing at the moment to raise her head, the eyes of the two young women meet—meet, Emma Marsland may one day be glad to remember, with a look of forgiveness and reconciliation at last.

It is considered etiquette at the Liddington public balls for "everybody" to leave together: Lady Laurie orders her carriage at two; Mrs. Coventry Brown, and all minor luminaries, order theirs at the same hour. After her quadrille with Sir John, Emma has one blissful round

dance with her lover, then quits the ball-room on his arm, some bald-headed gentleman of Chalkshire repute, you may be sure, escorting Mrs. Crosbie--poor Mrs. Crosbie, ready to weep with maternal joy at the happy turn events have taken, but dignified and well-bred in her demeanor towards Providence to the last.

In the vestibule occurs the usual crush of cloaked and hooded ladies, and of gentlemen tripping themselves up over the ladies' trains. "Charming ball, was it not?" "Oh, charming! Never saw your daughters look so well." "Good night, dear Lucy Laurie." "Hope you will not suffer from the heat!" "Hope you will not suffer from the cold!" So the Chalkshire notables, treading on each other's satin toes, and murmuring platitudes in each other's weary faces, fight their way to the front, and vanish from the stage of this little drama.

"Mrs. Coventry Brown's carriage!"

Forth steps the majestic woman, liker to a purring white cat than ever, with a swan's-down cloak drawn up around her throat; the three youthful white cats, also in swan's-down, following.

"Mrs. Pippin's carriage!"

The watchful barn-door mamma, and her brood of elderly chickens, pass away out of our sight.

"Mrs. Crosbie's carriage!"

No; the name, this time, has been shouted wrong. Mrs. Crosbie's carriage next but one.

Mrs. Francis Theobald's carriage stops the way.

She flutters down the steps in her white dress and flowers at the Duke of Malta's side, the light from the lamps outside shining on her; flushed, successful—as women count success—yet with that same hunted look of which I have spoken upon her face still—a vision several persons among this Chalkshire assemblage are not likely to forget.

The Duke stands, bareheaded, eagerly whispering to her for a minute or more after she is seated, heedless, it would seem, of the string of county carriages whose progress Mrs. Francis Theobald's hack vehicle impedes.

He whispers more and more eagerly; Jane never answers. At last, "If you expect me to remember anything about it, you had better write the name down," she remarks, in a cold, hard sort of tone.

Rawdon Crosbie is near enough to hear her words. "I never remembered a promise or an address in my life."

She hands the Duke her ball programme; he scribbles a word or two on the back and gives it to her again, with another last whisper.

And then the door of the carriage is shut, and Jane drives away, the Duke of Malta watching her progress into the darkness of the night.

CHAPTER XLI.

ALONG THE RAILROAD TO RUIN.

Away into the darkness; back through the hush and sweetness of the August night, *home*.

Hannah, the nursemaid, the only watcher in the grim old house—Hannah, with nerves already shaken by rats and creaking boards, stares open-mouthed at the apparition of Mrs. Theobald's face, ghostly now that it has cooled from the flush and excitement of the ball; the blue eyes weary, yet with an unnatural glow of fire in their weariness; the hair pushed back from the temples; the lips dry and scarlet; the whole expression of her face changed.

Will Mrs. Theobald please to take anything? Yes, Mrs. Theobald will take some brandy and water when she gets up stairs, the proportion of brandy not small, Hannah. And then she submits to having pins taken out and flowers unsustened; submits to Hannah's talk, and—and wants nothing more. Wants nothing but to be left alone, within locked doors, the reflection of her own face in the looking-glass, the sight of Blossy asleep and rosy in her cot, for company.

In the fine old days when rack and thumbscrew were called in to the aid of orthodox social opinions, the accused, we read, did, after the first great wrench of nerve and muscle, feel little more; man's physical capacity for suffering being, thank Heaven, less boundless than man's capacity for inflicting it. Jane should have gone through the worst by now, if the same law hold good in the moral as in the material world, which unfortunately it does not.

In the infinite spirit is room
For the pulse of an infinite pain.

She has been in torture throughout the evening; was in torture while she danced.

smiled, planned, radiant with "success," the ruin of all her future years; is in torture now.

The room she and Theobald occupy is the same beet or purple room to which her sisters-in-law led her on the night when she first tasted respectability. There is the ghostly four-poster in which cousin James died; there are the ghostly watch-pockets; there the two prim dressing-tables. Nothing altered outwardly. Only the life that then was in its spring laid low by sudden blight; only an unimportant unit about to be added to the sum of shipwrecked and abandoned human waifs with which the world's highways are overstocked.

Is it to be wondered at? Jane took her brandy and water at a draught as soon as the servant left her alone, and the result of the stimulant is, no merciful stupor, no kindly impairment of reason, but rather a sharpened power of gauging her wretchedness to its depths. Is this crowning act of her history a thing in any way to wonder at? She remembers a score of children who learned in the same class with her from Adolphe Dido, and who have most of them ended as she will, only with less noise and glitter. Some innate tendency of ballet-girls probably, against which, now that the play of life begins to "work close," it were vain to struggle. One's fate—as well accept fate bravely—make no whine over it. And yet—and yet—what love resurgent, what yearning toward all things right and honest, were in her heart four hours ago. What loathing, what abhorrence for the future to which she tacitly stands committed, are in her heart now!

Taking her candle, she goes up to Blossey's cot and bends over, looking at her in a sort of blank despair. The child "features" Theobald, as the country people say, and the likeness comes out strongest when sleep has shut the blue eyes which are her sole resemblance to her mother. Theobald's fair hair and complexion, his forehead, his print of chin—Theobald's whole face rises before Jane's sight with cruel distinctness as she looks at the baby face of his little daughter. And she turns from her abruptly; yes, turns from her with a feeling well-nigh of hatred. How should I write the word if I did not know that love and hatred, under the overmas-

tering influence of jealousy, are exchangeable terms?

She turns from the child, I say, and for an instant stands motionless, then, through a half-open door, walks into a small adjoining room, her husband's dressing-room. It is in disorder, Esther the house-maid having taken her day's junketing at the races; just as Mr. Theobald left it after dressing this morning. Three or four summer cravats—failures—are strewn about the dressing-table; the gloves in which he drove over from The Folly lie on the floor. She stoops and picks one of these gloves up; in I know not what passion of tenderness clasps it tight, tight to her breast for a moment, then flings it from her with a gesture of abhorrence. Melodramatic, highly; but coming from Jane, natural. If she were dying, the poor theatre-nurtured girl must be theatrical still. After this, shutting and locking the door, as though she would lock him away from her thoughts with the action, she comes back to her room and finishes undressing.

By now a faintest primrose tinge has begun to penetrate through the heavy window curtains. Jane draws one back and sees the world already entered upon a new day; sees the chill light resting on the hoar old elms around Theobald's, and on the faintly-outlined chalk downs that were a thousand years before she was, and will be a thousand years after she has sinned and suffered her little hour and gone to sleep again. What matter her sorrows or her wrongs in this great system of things wherein she holds so poor a place? Of what account are they or she to any one? And then return to her mind the protestations of life-long devotion, the offers of riches, freedom, "position," which have been incessantly whispered in her ear throughout the evening. And though she loathes the offers and him who made them alike—more than this, though, with wisdom prematurely learnt in the sharpest of all schools, she appraises both protestations and offers at their exact value—it seems to her that there can be no going back now; that what is coming is not only inevitable, but best.

All times of revolution, in nations or in a girl's ignorant heart, are times of lightning speed. Four hours ago, reckoning

time by ordinary computation, Jane was swayed by one fierce passion, simply; in an access of jealousy, desired swift and sure and desperate retaliation upon one offender. She has gone through a whole lifetime of moral change since then; will be avenged not only for her bruised and despised love's sake, not on Theobald only, now, but on the world; will throw down the gauntlet not merely to the Chalkshire respectability which has flouted her, but to all respectability. (An old, ever-new story, reader. Society revolting against the class; the individual revolting against, and so justifying, society.) How puerile, childish, seems that scheme she once entertained of returning to the stage! What, go through the bitter toil, the heat, the cold of that hardest slavery, to win the applause of a capricious public, the paltry earnings of some forty or fifty shillings a week, while Theobald, by good luck rid, without signal disgrace, of his incumbrance, might return *honorable* to the world that had found no place for her, the world of Lady Rose Golightly!

Work wants a sound heart. If at any time, while he loved and was faithful to her, Francis Theobald had happened to ruin himself utterly—yes, to the wanting of bread—never doubt that Jane would have gone back to the stage, short skirts, hard work, modest pay, and all, and have pirouetted bravely for his support; yes, and have had him wear fine lavender gloves and embroidered linen, and smoke the best attainable cigars, out of her poor superfluities.

That is just the sort of stuff she is made of.

Not now, not now!

—She moves across to her dressing-table, where lie her soiled ball gloves, her faded bouquet, her programme. She takes up this last, and looks down through the list of dances—each “*Valse d'Amour*” or “*Galop Infernal*” marking a station of her journey along the railroad to ruin! —then turns over to the other side, and in cold, green daylight, reads the words the Duke wrote there in pencil as he stood bareheaded, the county watching, I will not say envying her “success,” beside the door of her carriage.

Only three or four words: the address of a certain hotel in Brussels, with his Grace's initials scrawled in monogram underneath. But Jane's face turns suddenly ashen as she reads them. Pain,

like pleasure, has its exaltations; pain hitherto has lifted her in some measure above the level of her guilt. The sight of those few words, in the Duke's handwriting, and in her possession, makes her realize, with a shiver of actual bodily terror, what all this is that is besetting her.

God, can she escape, may she escape! Help her if she be not already past the reach of help! She hides the programme out of sight in her dressing-table drawer—as though its secret could be deciphered by any eyes save her own—and going up to her bed, not to the side where Bossy lies asleep, stands, her ashen face growing more ashen, her cold hands clasped together rigidly, then falls down on her knees and tries to pray.

She and Min received what would be counted but a heathen kind of bringing up from poor, strong-hearted, weak-headed Uncle Dick. When the children were young, however, Uncle Dick's wife did, in her scanty leisure, in her unenlightened way, teach these heaven-s forsaken little theatre rats to go on their knees and repent a certain form of words at night. And Jane has clung to the habit since—no power of Theobald's, even, being able to shake her from what he has often called the “one mild hypocrisy” of her character.

Hypocrisy were to Jane a physical impossibility. Had Theobald used the word superstition, he might have been nearer the mark. For in truth the “prayer” which has constituted the sole nourishment of her spiritual life is one I should blush to submit to the eyes of educated readers; a formula scarcely to be ranked higher than the distich of which “Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John” is the first line. And still it is a prayer; an outcry of weakness to strength; an acknowledgment of something beyond, above this visible life of ours and its needs. And formula, superstition, parrot-like repetition of soulless words—call it by what name one will—Jane has never, knowingly, laid her head on her pillow since she was a child without going through it.

She goes through it now. Now, for the first time in her existence, probably, learns what prayer means. For she learns that her formula means nothing! She is staring at the sickly daylight on the opposite wall, and kneeling with hands joined, and lips moving, and her heart

dumb. Oh, all you who have suffered, do you not know the meaning of that awful impotence—her heart dumb?

Well, these things cannot be forced. Prayerless, hopeless, unrepentant, nothing remains for Jane but to get into her bed and watch the green light turn to gold, then white; presently to hear the birds sing, and then the whistle of the gardener's boy as he passes under her window to his work. After a time the servants begin to stir in the house, and Blossy, waking, flings her soft arms round her mother's neck and asks, as she has done every morning since Saturday, "Why Dada, him not here!" and must have her game of romps as usual.

And Blossy has her game; sings negro melodies at the pitch of her shrill voice; dances fancies on the bed barefooted, with night-gown artistically upraised in the morning sunshine; Jane forced to listen to her, forced to look at her! For what might the servants think, so low has she sunk already—Jane, who, as long as she was honest, cared not a straw for the whole world!—what might the servants think if she rung earlier than on another morning to have the child taken away to the nursery?

By and by comes her own getting up and dressing. Her limbs ache as they never ached after any ball before, her hands tremble, her throat feels parched. And still, thanks to yesterday's scorching on the race course, thanks to the fever of the night, her cheeks retain their color. When she comes down stairs she is able to force her voice as near as may be into its accustomed tone. The servants, if questioned hereafter, will be ready, doubt not, to affirm that "Missus never looked better nor in better spirits, and took her breakfast hearty, and seemed quite cheerful with Miss Blossy." Trustworthy, discriminative souls! Is it not upon evidence like this that the history of half our fireside tragedies is written?

And the morning hours drag by to noon. Blossy's dinner-time comes, and then, as Jane sits at the table, attending to the child, and making what pretence she can of swallowing food herself, arrives a servant from The Folly with a note, the same that should have been sent over to her last night, from Mr. Theobald:

"Dear Jane," her lord and master

writes: "After what you said to-day, I conclude you will not mind going to the ball alone. Lord Barty Beautesert has asked me to stay with him for a few days on board his yacht at Cowes. I start to-night. Address to me, 'On board the *Laïs*, Cowes,' if you should have occasion to write. Impossible to say for certain when I shall be back.

"Your affectionate husband,

"FRANCIS THEOBALD."

"P. S.—If you want money, you will find some in my Russian-leather case. The key must be in one of my waistcoat pockets in the dressing-room."

Well, the postscript is important, more important possibly than Mr. Theobald imagined when he wrote it. Not many human actions, virtuous or criminal, can come to fruition unless they have cash as a basis—none, certainly, involving railway fares and steamboat tickets; and Jane was brought by current household expenses to her last sovereign yesterday.

Mr. Theobald's thoughtfulness is opportune.

She goes up stairs to his dressing-room, searches for the key, happily, or unhappily, finds it, and gets what money she believes will suffice to carry her to Brussels—eight or ten pounds in gold. This done, she divests herself of the few trinkets she chances to have about her, her chain and watch, a brooch of some slender value, her rings (except her wedding-ring—she will wear that a little longer yet); then puts on her hat and shawl, and stands ready to go, richer only by those eight or ten sovereigns and by her wedding-ring than on the day when she came to Francis Theobald as a bride.

Now there is one last farewell to be uttered, farewell between mother and child, between soul and body! Get that wrench over, with as little thinking about it as possible, and quickly. The train by which she means to go is express—exact to a second. Not too much time left her, as it is, for walking to the station.

Blossy is amusing herself alone in the breakfast room down stairs. This room, as I have said, is the cheerfiest one in the house, the room into which Jane has collected together everything in the shape of mirror or ornament Theobalds can boast. It makes a charming little theatre for Blossy, who indeed wants no other en-

ertainment when she has got an abundance of looking-glass to reflect her own small figure and represent imaginary audiences as she sings and dances.

Especially contented with the world, and everything in it, is Miss Theobald at this moment. Auntie Min brought her a gift of gorgeous cherry-colored sash and shoulder-knots from London yesterday, requesting, as she gave it, that the finery should be enjoyed, not locked away, too fine for use, out of Blossy's jurisdiction. So over her little holland house-frock the child, in the seventh heaven of enraptured vanity, disports her *grandeur*.

Nor is she quite without company.

The paper of the room is of quaint old-fashioned design—all white and gold arabesque, with impossible palm trees intermingled, and small green monkeys sitting or clinging by impossible tails and hands among the boughs. Well, as Jane enters, in her travelling dress, leaden-eyed, leaden-hearted, Bloss, with infinite grace and variety of gesture, is just exhibiting her ribbons to the monkeys; curtseying to this one, extending a shoulder-knot to that, holding forth the smart fringed end of her sash with disdainful sense of superiority to another. She takes no notice whatsoever of her mother's entrance, but continues, self-absorbed and grave, to bestow her salutations around. So Jane goes up and lays her gloved hand upon her head.

"Good-by, Bloss," she says, in a thick, hoarse voice. Then snatches hold of her tight. Kisses neither lips nor brow, but buries her face for a moment among the child's mass of silken curls.

"Mine zibbons—pitty zibbons!" cries Bloss, stroking her ruffled finery with tender fingers, and freeing herself with a little push from the interruption. "Me dot pitty zibbons!"

And then back to her bows and curtseys and attitudinizing before her friends the monkeys.

A natural action enough, that push. What matters the universe, with all the love it contains, to a child still untired of its last new plaything!

But to Jane's ruined heart a death-stan.

Even the child wants her not; the child is Theobald's; will be better off, "both as regards this world and the next," without her than with her.

So—that wrench is over, the one good by she had to speak spoken. And now out into the open daylight, into the sight of men, and on with her journey.

CHAPTER XLII.

FAST AND LOOSE WITH DESTINY.

JANE'S destination is Dover; from thence by night mail to Ostend, and then on to Brussels, after which point our story is not further concerned.

She has made no plan in detail of the journey, and on reaching Dover learns, to her dismay, that she will have more than three hours to wait. The Belgian steamer, so one of the railway porters informs her, does not start till seven—passengers not allowed on board till half-past six. Where is she to spend these hours? How kill this hideous interval of time, without the narcotic of action or movement to deaden her pain—still the remorse that already, the first stage of her journey scarce over, burns at her heart?

She knows several of the large Dover hotels, having stopped there often in better, innocent days, with Theobald; but dreading recognition, will show her face at none of these—will sooner bear her three hours' ordeal alone and unnoticed, in the ladies' waiting-room at the station. However, the atmosphere of the waiting-room makes her faint and sick; after a time, too, she begins to think (Jane grown a coward in such matters!) that the austere-looking woman who guards the water-bottle and texts eyes her with suspicion; and so wanders forth into the streets, resolved, if walking be possible, to pass the remainder of the time until she can go on board in the open air.

She finds that it is not possible. Walking wants strength, and Jane, after ten or twelve minutes' trial, discovers with terror that she has no strength left. At last, seeing a small but decent inn not far from the harbor, she enters it, and in a halting voice asks the tawdrily-dressed landlady, who comes out from the bar to meet her, if she can have a sitting-room to herself for about a couple of hours. She has to wait until the departure of the Ostend boat at seven.

The woman gives her a hard look—the logic of a landlady's facts disinclining her

doubtless, toward female travellers devoid of luggage or ostensible masculine protection. "A sitting-room? Why, yes, folks can have a parlor to themselves of course, by paying for it; but——"

"I will pay you what you choose to ask me," is Jane's answer, hurriedly drawing out and opening her purse.

At which the hard look mollifies. Next to masculine protection, what's so respectable as a well-filled purse! "Ah, the young lady is going across the water, is she? 'Tis to be hoped, for her sake, the night will be fine; but the sailors don't like the look of the sky, and the wind is changing fast." Then, after leading her some steps along a stifling, beery passage, mine hostess shows her guest into a stifling, beery parlor, overlooking the harbor and shipping, and redolent of both, and leaves her alone.

The furniture in this parlor consists of a rickety horsehair couch, a table, a couple of chairs, and a shelf holding a few odd volumes of musty leather-bound books. Its adornments are, Dover castle in shell-work, a bunch of grotesquely unnatural feather tulips, and a mezzotint engraving of H. M. King William the Fourth: H. M. curveting on a lamb's-wool charger through a lamb's-wool forest, with the towers of Windsor, royally defying every rule of perspective, in the background.

Well, before Jane has been here three minutes, it seems to her as though this miserable place and its belongings—aye, even to the grouping of the unnatural tulips, the simper on the face of majesty—had been familiar objects for years. With such ease do we attune ourselves, in certain overstrung states of mind and body, to each successive accompaniment or background of our pain! Her first hope when the woman left her alone was that she might sleep. No matter how uninviting the couch, she would rest her throbbing temples on its pillow in an attitude, at least, of sleep. And sleep will not come near her. The very attempt at rest has but quickened the fever of her brain. No escape that way. She must face conscience at last; must bear whatever torture her own thick-coming, morbidly-vivid thoughts have power to inflict upon her.

They shape themselves, bit by bit, into a retrospect—mocking her sick heart by its brightness—of all the happiest periods

of her life. Blankly staring at the opposite wall, and at the face of simpering mezzotint majesty, Jane bethinks her of the childish years when she and Min ran wild about the precincts of Drury Lane and Covent Garden; of her short-lived girlish dreams of theatrical success; of that first day when Theobald "stood, and fell in love with her," despite her darned merino and the shabby roses in her hat, from the half-lit slips of the Royal!

—She did not care for him so very much, she remembers, in the early days of their courtship; or so, confident of her power, she used to tell him. She had seen other men she fancied as well before. Mr. Theobald, if he liked, might go. Presents? Oh, she wouldn't take a present from a prince. Give up the stage and become a lady? With her agreement signed, and her dresses ready, and success certain! —thanks! The honor of Mr. Theobald's preference was great, but she preferred liberty to honor; was too young to know her own mind yet. Mr. Theobald might go. And he went. For two days, during which the world turned black to her, stayed away. Then suddenly, just when she was beginning to think he had taken her at her word and gone forever, made his appearance at the old corner of Wellington street as she was returning home from rehearsal, and said, "Jane, my dear, I want your answer to a certain question—there can be only one answer for you to give, you know—will you throw up your engagement and marry me?" And there was only one answer for her to give. She threw up her engagement and married him.

She remembers the arrangements of their most Bohemian wedding: Theobald in a morning suit, and smoking his pipe until he reached the vestry door; herself in a bonnet made by her own hands and a print dress; with only just sufficient witnesses in the gloomy London church to render the marriage legal. She remembers their honeymoon (the honeymoon that to Jane's heart never quite waned) on the Continent.

Summer was in its bloom; they went to Ems, Frankfort, Baden-Baden. Oh, the sunshine of those days! Oh, the nights, white with stars, when, hands furtively clasped, they used to wander, listening a little to the music and much to their own whispers among dim-lit Kur-

saal gardens! Oh, the out-of-door dinners and suppers, those two alone, wanting no other guest, save the invisible guest love, who sat between them!

She thinks of their winter in Homburg, of her money troubles—light ones, in sooth; was not Theobald her lover still? Then of her child's birth; of Blossy's first imperfect words; of the day at ten months old when, miracle of a baby, Blossy ran from her knee, alone, to Theobald's arms. She remembers. Ah, my God, no! These are not things to think of unless one would go mad outright. Think, instead, of later cruel days—of the neglect, the faithlessness, that are the justification of one's guilt. But thought will not be put in shackles. Thought turns from the living, miserable present; flies back, swift-winged, to the honeyed years that are dead—the years, with all their sins of omission, undarkened by a solitary cloud of coldness or of estrangement!

—How she has *loved* life since her marriage! Homeless, spendthrift, vagrant, though they have been, how few thorns have grown among their roses! They have lived openly and avowedly for pleasure only, and have found it, or Jane has—felt pleasure in her dress and balls and vanities, pleasure in her child and husband, pleasure in the mere fact of drawing breath, and of being young and fair.

And now all is over; not a wreck of the old joy left; and through no fault of hers—our souls are kinder to us sometimes than life is—through no fault of hers. Inch by inch, foot by foot, she has been hurried toward this precipice upon whose last pent she stands wanting, striving to regain her footing, but borne down ever by fate stronger than her will.

If society, if six, four, two—nay, if one kindly human heart had bidden her God-speed when she came to Chalkshire; if the harsh judgments wrongly visited on her had been visited, righteously, on Lady Rose Golightly; if—[“] But why make her weary brain wearier with such “ifs”? Does right, does justice exist in the world at all? Is there not one law for the rich, and one for the poor; one law for men, and one for women; one law for the well-born, and one for those who are not? The words spoken by Charlotte Theobald yesterday return abruptly to her remembrance, and with them returns the thought

of Charlotte Theobald's outstretched hand: “If you want a friend, and the time may come sooner than you think, you'll know where to find one.”

In that chill offer was there just a last chance of salvation for her? Is it possible—heavens, is it possible—that it might be her means of salvation yet?

She starts up from the couch, and for a minute or two walks up and down the room; then, her heavy limbs aching after even this exertion, sinks down again into her former place.

Salvation possible, and at the hands of Francis Theobald's sisters! What, return, a suppliant for their compassion? Tell the truth (even in such a strait as this no plan involving falsehood crosses Jane's imagination; to whatever depth she fall, the one virtue of truth must remain linked to her thousand other crimes), standing in the Miss Theobalds' starched drawing-room—with the curious, self-torturing instinct of the miserable, she puts the whole scene before herself in detail—looking into the Miss Theobalds' starched faces, make her confession? She had abandoned home, child, husband, deliberately, and, of her own free will, set out upon the path of dishonor; then, at the first stage of her journey, pluck failing her, had come back repentant, to sue for mercy. What answer would a woman receive at the hands of such women, of any women, to such an appeal? Charlotte Theobald would stand by her, little doubt of that, as Jane has seen a policeman stand by some wretch whom the crowd would roughly handle, but whom it is the policeman's duty to protect and keep intact for the official tortures of the condemned cell or penitentiary. She, Jane Theobald, would be in a kind of select condemned cell, or private family penitentiary, for the rest of her life, were she to give herself over to the law in the person of Charlotte Theobald. A woman not of aristocratic birth who has made one false step, half a false step, and acknowledged it, and retrograded, must, as society at present is framed, be branded with a scarlet or other letter until her life's end.

Why, to go bravely on, run the whole gauntlet of shame, with shame's chances (not a few take them altogether) of final success, were better wisdom, as far as any prospect of social rehabilitation goes

She raises her eyes, and majesty seems to give a smile of benign approval at the sentiment.

After a time re-enters the hostess; suspicious, no doubt, that the solitary female traveller may be making away with the chairs and tables. The solitary female traveller rests wearily on the same place on the couch, her head lying back against the wall, her face fever-red and haggard. Will she take dinner? tea? Will she take refreshment—tartly this—of no kind? Soda and brandy? To be sure. Excellent thing a soda and brandy before a sea voyage, and a captain's biscuit with it. The last not ordered by Jane, but suggested as costing an extra threepence by the hostess. In another minute some nauseous compound in a tumbler, with a plate of villainous-looking fossil sea biscuits, are set before her.

Jane has scarcely tasted food since her luncheon on the race-course yesterday. Excitement has been her meat; no very healthy nutriment, as we know, but all-satisfying while it lasts. It satisfies her still. She swallows the contents of the tumbler; in spite of its nauseous taste, feels strengthened by it. Then, with a sense that consumption of food in some shape is required of her, puts one of the fossil biscuits into her pocket, and rings the bell, desiring to pay quickly that which she owes for her entertainment, and start.

"Use of sitting-room, a shilling; brandy and soda, a shilling; biscuits, threepence; attendance, ditto. Total, two and sixpence."

Jane draws forth her purse to requite this last hospitality her native land shall offer her. It contains only gold-yellow tempting sovereigns—won, did she but know it, at The Folly over night. And again the hostess's hard eyes soften humanly. Attendance is charged threepence, may be made sixpence if a guest has a mind to behave handsome, and will the lady be kind enough to wait for a minute or so? She must just step inside her own sitting-room behind the bar to get change.

The lady waits, standing beside the shelf of leather-bound volumes I have mentioned. And now occurs to Jane Theobald one of those curious chance revelations which at seasons, in places most un-

expected, through agencies the most outwardly trivial, do shine in on our souls in their hour of direst necessity. She stands, I say, waiting, inert, half stupefied. Her body is weak, the brandy of its kind was strong. And as she stands thus, sees a little marker of red ribbon appearing above the edges of one of the dingy books.

If the ribbon had been black, Jane had probably never noticed it. The red strikes her attention mechanically. Mechanically she takes the book—an odd volume of sermons by Bishop Porteous—from the shelf, opens it listlessly at the place marked, and reads, in the big pale type, on the yellow ribbed paper of a century ago, this passage:

"And as it sometimes happens that they who have the weakest and most distempered frames, by means of an exact regimen and unshaken perseverance in rule and method, outlive those of a robuster make and more luxuriant health; so there are abundant instances where men of the most perverse dispositions and most unruly turn of mind, by keeping a steady guard upon their weak points and gradually but continually correcting their defects, going on from strength to strength and from one degree of perfection to another, have at length arrived at a higher pitch of virtue than those for whom nature had done much, and who would therefore do but little for themselves.

"Let us then never despair."

Common enough words, it may be said. Sunday utterances of a place-seeking chaplain who, in the hope of lawn sleeves under George the Third, wrote on the occasion of George the Second's funeral that "earth was not pure enough for the deceased King's abode; his only place was heaven." No matter. They have done good work for once, have delivered to one lost soul the highest message a man's words can ever convey to his fellows: redemption for the fallen, strength for the weak, hope for all. "Let us then never despair."

Jane walks forth from the inn with limbs that know not their heaviness mine hostess watching her depart with sagal-prophetic shakes of the head. A wedding-ring was on the girl's finger truly, but people may come to no good even with that. She walks down to the quay through rain, now beginning to fall in heavy showers, and heeds it not. Her

brain is on fire, her whole moral nature in a state of exaltation. Material conditions of fatigue or wet affect her not.

Arrived with a string of other foot passengers by the side of the Belgian steamer, she stands for a space, because those about her stand. When her turn comes, files across the gangway like the rest.

"From strength to strength, from perfection to perfection. Let us then never despair." The words lift her to a kind of ecstasy. She repeats them in her heart again and again, as though to repeat them were of itself an act of salvation. And all the time the vessel is getting up its steam fast, the vessel that is to bear her another stage on her journey to Brussels, and she makes no effort—it does not suggest itself to her fevered, half-delirious thoughts, to make an effort to leave it. "From strength to strength, from perfection to perfection—"

"Better go down below, mum, hadn't you?" says a sailor's rough, friendly voice. "You're a-getting wet through up here on deck."

"Getting!" Why, her chest and shoulders are wet to the skin already; the sensation, as far as she feels it at all, pleasurable. However, she obeys instantly; directed by the same friendly voice, goes below, then makes her way, guided by the flicker of a lamp, through a half-open door, into the ladies' cabin. Ladies are ranged around in berths prepared for seasickness; the stewardess sits chatting to a rosy-faced young woman, evidently in her own rank of life, who holds a child in her arms. Jane sinks down on a sofa just within the door and listens—hears rather: to listen denotes an act of voluntary attention—hears what the two women talk about. They talk dramatically, after the manner of uneducated people, about what "he" said and "she" said; they enter, unreservedly and aloud, into the details of their private affairs. At the end of two or three minutes Jane knows that the younger woman is returning home to her husband, who owns some sort of hotel or lodging-house in Ostend, and that her name is Smith. And she is sensible of a certain remote feeling of comfort from the knowledge. The woman's voice and face are kindly; some faintest clue to human kinship seems given in the fact of knowing her name. If—if this queer sensation of weakness should get worse, one's head

more unsteady, it might be well that there were *some one* near, some pitying Christian woman (not of the upper or visitable classes), to hold out a hand of succor in one's need.

Creak, creak, go the boards, resounding under many feet, overhead; the rising wind whistles; the big drops beat against the skylight.

"We shall have a roughish night of it, I'm afraid, ma'am," observes the younger woman, clasping the child she holds tighter to her breast as she addresses the stewardess.

"Yes, and the tide against us, too," answers the latter, with the equanimity of a human being to whom an extra-rough sea only means extra sea-sick ladies and extra fees to oneself. "But your little maid's a good sailor, Mrs. S."

"Well, yes, bless her! She don't often ail by sea or by land."

And putting back her shawl with tender hand, the woman reveals to Jane's aching sight—Blossy. Not the veritable living Blossy (at this moment, doubtless, asleep and rosy in her cot); but Blossy notwithstanding. To a mother every little child is in some measure hers, and brings her, even more vividly than memory can, into the presence of the one she has left.

"A big girl, Mrs. Smith," remarks the stewardess, looking down critically at the small sleeper. "I doubt but she's too stout for health."

"Not she," cries the mother quickly. "You should see her shoulders when she stands—as upright! and such a pair of legs! and only three years old next Michaelmas. Smith was all for keeping her home with him. I was called away to poor father, sudden, ma'am, as you know, and Smith wanted to keep the child home along of him. But, bless you, I couldn't be happy and her out of my sight. A young child like that, as I say, they're well to-day and sick to-morrow."

The stewardess shakes her head with the habitual melancholy of her profession. "You may say that, my dear. Well to-day and *gone* to-morrow! And this summer, especial. I never knew so much sickness as there is among the young children this summer."

Jane starts to her feet; she turns abruptly from the sight of the sleeping child, and gropes her way out of the cabin. The words of the sermon spoke to her con-

science, as we have seen, but from without—artificially. She kept upon the road to Brussels still. Every fibre of her nature, bodily and mental, is smitten by the women's careless talk, smitten through the instinct which lies at the very root and foundation of all conscience. One blind mighty hunger, to get back to the child she has abandoned, fills her heart. Blossy's kisses, Blossy's songs and dances, the sweets, the quintessence of her woman's life; what mattered the alights of the world, the censure of narrow brains and dull malice—nay, what mattered Theobald's infidelity, while she had these? And she has forsaken these; has put a barrier between herself and all that to her is life forevermore. O fool! into what black night of hopeless, loveless despair was she not about to drift? *Was*—aye, for she will turn back yet. What to her is society, or the reception that awaits her from society? She will have Blossy. Has done nothing,—God be thanked for that—to forfeit the pressure of Blossy's arms, the touch of Blossy's lips!

Her strength seems to have come back by miracle. She reaches the deck without an effort. All that remains now is, to walk back on shore and to the station, and take the first train that will bear her—no matter how short a stage—upon her journey home.

Home? No, Jane; not so. Not thus may we play fast and loose with destiny. She reaches the deck, is conscious of a certain tremulous movement of the vessel, and looking quickly around through the driving rain sees a gleam of lights, the outline of dark moving objects on either side. A second longer look conveys to her the whole truth. The steamer at this very moment is passing outward through the narrow mouth of Dover harbor. Return is impossible.

CHAPTER XLIII.

LORD BARTY AND HIS FRIENDS.

THE club gardens at Cowes. Picturesque groups of yachting people in after-dinner dress. Mingled exhalations of Havana cigars. August flowers and Cowes mud. Conversation a trifle more animated, perhaps, than the after-dinner conversation of the same people would be in London, but abounding in much the

same scintillations of wit and intellect. A foreground group with whom we have concern—Lord Barty Beaudesert, and the guests who, during the last forty-eight hours, have been enjoying his hospitality and the charms of each other's society on board the *Laïs*.

It is said pleasantly, by those who should know them best—their greatest enemies and their greatest friends—that the race of Beaudesert has always consisted in pretty equal divisions of knaves and fools. Of the pair of noble brothers who are the race's living representatives, Lord Barty Beaudesert is—not the fool. You need not look into his face to see that. Though, for my part, I hold that knaves and fools are convertible terms. No man would be a knave unless he were in some degree a fool. No fool have you ever met who had not in him the potential elements, at least, of knavery.

Lord Barty has the typical "classic" fool's profile of all the Beaudeserts, with the prominent, lack-lustre, Beaudesert eye. And still something which scarcely rises to intellect, the sharp wide-awake look, rather, that you will find in a wiry little fox terrier, redeems his smooth red face from the absolute Beaudesert vacuity.

Very wide-awake, indeed, is Lord Barty Beaudesert. Very well known, and with no snow-white reputation, in betting-rings, billiard-rooms, and all other resorts where the wining and losing of men's money is legitimate business!

And still Lord Barty is a poor man, for the son and brother of a duke; a very poor man indeed.

He keeps a yacht—hires it, rather, captain, crew, and all; nothing in the world is absolutely Lord Barty's own—on principles of economy. "The cheapest thing going, a yacht," Lord Barty says. "No house rent, no taxes, no servants. And then you know your outgoing expenses to a shilling."

Lord Barty adds nothing about your incoming revenues; and these, to a hospitable yachtsman, fond of *loo* and *chicken-hazard*, and blessed with friends of the pigeon-like nature of little Lord Verreker—and it may be hoped, of this Dundreary fellow Rose is soft about—are not inconsiderable.

The Dundreary fellow Rose is soft about has not, as things at present stand, proved

a very lucrative speculation to Lord Barty Beaudesert. Not a man at any time whom I would classify as belonging to the genus pigeon is Francis Theobald, although his extreme guilelessness of manner has more than once led even professional fanciers of those birds astray in their judgment upon him. And during the past few days, ever since he determined, indeed, to "follow up his luck" at The Folly, Theobald has been enjoying fortune unprecedented—the fortune of a man whom all the gods have conspired to ruin!

Last night—'twas a roughish night at sea, as we know, but weather that might cruelly toss a small mail steamer in the channel is comparatively unselt in the smooth land-locked roads off Cowes—last night, after the boat-race, there was a dinner, with a little loo, when the ladies left, on board the *Laïs*. And Theobald won everything. Young Lord Verreker fell a victim, naturally. For what end do Lord Verrekars of one-and-twenty exist at all (on board the *Laïs*, especially), unless it be to fall victims? But the same fate beset the veterans; the same fate beset Harry Desmond and Lord Barty. No science, no combination of science, could hold its own against the aces and kings of Mr. Theobald.

I repeat it, a most unfavorable speculation hitherto has this Dundreary fellow Rose is soft about proved to Lord Barty Beaudesert. How unfavorable a one is being discussed between Colonel Desmond and Lord Barty at this moment—Loo Childers chatting with the innocent frankness that proved Mr. Smylie's undoing to young Lord Verreker; Lady Rose and Mr. Theobald talking in low murmurs on a rustic seat a little apart from the rest.

When men and women, in real life, not romance, talk together in this murmuring fashion, I have ascertained after much close practical observation that, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, the exhaustion of tone is accompanied by a corresponding exhaustion of ideas. You watch some whispered colloquy, every word of which, judging from outward manner, should be fraught with perilous dramatic interest; you listen and hear wire-drawn monosyllables about the last change in the weather or the approaching change in bonnets. The interesting murmuring pair have long ago, to the best of their

ability, "said everything." Lady Rose has by no means reached this fatal climax in a tender friendship. But Theobald reached it long ago. He is not, as I have often repeated, a ladies' man. With his wife he is never bored; but then Jane is not a lady! Jane, in her ignorance, her originality, her chameleon-like moods of thought and temper, is always more or less amusing. Lady Rose Golightly is not amusing in the least, when one has had six or seven days of Lady Rose Golightly. And Theobald dimly suspects—in the inmost recesses of his soul a horrible suspicion is beginning to gain ground—that Lady Rose Golightly, at thirty years of age, is capable of far more constant feelings than was Lady Rose Beaudesert at twenty-two. Capable, it may be, of that last resource of worn-out women of the world, a serious passion. But if he were convinced of this, and convinced that he were to be the object of the passion, Mr. Theobald, you may be very sure, would get on board the next steamer that leaves Cowes for the main land, and bid Lady Rose Golightly, and every person and thing belonging to her, an eternal good-by!

The murmurs become more and more languid, and Lady Rose's cunning wastes itself in vain efforts to instil into them some kind of galvanic life. Sprightliness, sentiment, veiled half-reproaches—all fall blankly to the ground. At last, happily, occurs a diversion. A boy in red and blue uniform enters the garden, not twenty steps away from where Theobald and his companion are sitting, one of the ominous orange-colored envelopes we all of us know too well in his hand.

"Those terrible little telegraph boys!" says Lady Rose. "I have never been able to see one of them without a shudder since I lost my Coco. Coco was my Maltese, Mr. Theobald. The most beautiful dog in London, and affectionate!—the only creature, I believe, that ever loved me on earth."

"Case of a dear gazelle," responds Mr. Theobald, sensible that some kind of murmured imbecility is expected of him.

"Case of a dear gazelle, as you say. The poor old love was sickening when I had to leave town, so I gave strict orders to Burton to let me know if he got worse. On the second day after I left I got a telegram. Servants are so cruelly incon-

siderate! It would have been just as well, as I *had* gone, to spare me the last sad scene. Two of the first dog doctors had seen Coco, and there was no hope. I rushed up to town that night, just in time to see him alive. He died in my arms."

"Happy Coco!" observed Theobald, knocking the ashes from the tip of his cigar.

"And, from that day to this, the sight of a telegraph boy makes me get cold. I received another most distressing shock, I remember, when my poor mother had her last fatal illness. We were in the Highlands, just in the middle of one of the pleasantest shooting-parties. Really, I think there should be a law that some other hired person should be sent on first to prepare one for the telegraph boys."

"Or, better still, have some hired person to bear one's distressing shocks for one," observes Theobald, "like the deputy mourners at an Irish funeral."

"Ah, if civilization could only arrive at that!"

Lady Rose sighs and looks pensive. Mr. Theobald leans back on the rustic seat, speculating, perhaps, as to whether civilization will ever allow of tender friendships being done by deputy, too. The messenger comes nearer. One of the club waiters to whom he has addressed himself seems to point among the group we are watching for the person of whom he is in search.

"How glad I am we did not give a definite 'Yes' to Mrs. Dulcimer," says Lady Rose. Mrs. Dulcimer, a lady of nautical and other reputation, has asked all Cowes to dance on board her yacht tonight; but Lady Rose, mindful of Mr. Theobald's prejudices, has left the question of going open. If her strength allowed, and dear Mrs. Dulcimer would take so undecided an answer, she would be charmed. But in this hot weather Lady Rose is such a terribly poor creature; no knowing, till the eleventh hour, what Lady Rose's strength will allow her to do! "We should be quite sure of being bored if we went."

"Quite sure," Mr. Theobald acquiesces, mentally deciding that they would be tolerably certain of *that* anywhere, and under any circumstances.

And the messenger, with the orange envelope in his hand, approaches nearer.

"Really and truly I believe the telegram is for us," observes Lady Rose, looking over her shoulder with languid interest. "No, for Barty. Barty gets mysterious messages from his horrid jockeys and horse-racing people from morning till night."

But no; the orange envelope is not for Lord Barty Beaudesert. Finger to cap, the boy addresses his lordship, and, by a little nod of his lordship's head, has the rightful object of his search pointed out to him. Another three seconds—another three seconds, the last, of rose-watered boredom, and tender friendships, and Lady Rose Golightly—and the orange envelope is in Francis Theobald's hands.

"*MARtha SMITH, 4 rue de la Cloche, Ostend, to FRANCIS THEOBALD, on board the Lais, Cowes.*

"SIR: A lady named Jane Theobald lies here in my house dangerously ill. A letter she has about her bears your address. Please telegraph instructions, or come without delay."

Theobald starts up to his feet, his face turning to the ghastly, corpse-like hue very blonde-complexioned people do turn when the current of the blood is set suddenly away.

"No bad news from home, I hope?" asks Lady Rose in her quiet voice, as she watches him. With the selfishness of a thoroughly ignoble passion, it seems to Lady Rose Golightly that any bad news from home for Mr. Theobald must be good news to her.

He does not reply, does not see, hear her. The thought of Jane, of her love for him, of the first fond days of their marriage—all that there is yet of good in the man's nature gains mastery over him in this moment's sharpest agony, and holds him dumb.

"I am really afraid you have had bad news, Mr. Theobald?" cries Lady Rose. And as she speaks she rises, gracefully agitated, and stands beside him.

He puts the telegram, without a word of answer or of comment, into her hand.

"Most distressing—and so sudden!" Thus sympathizes Lady Rose, not lifting her eyes from the paper. "We must hope, indeed we must hope, that there may be some mistake or exaggeration. So often exaggeration in cases of illness! Would it not be well to telegraph for details?"

But, even as she says this, Theobald, unheeding her, questions the boy about the Portsmouth steamers. Quietly he speaks, death itself could not make Francis Theobald outwardly flurried, but in an odd hoarse voice—Lady Rose can scarcely recognize it as Theobald's—and with no faintest return of color to his blanched face.

"The steamer—the last steamer to Portsmouth—has not left yet, but the gentleman won't have a moment to lose if he wants to catch it. The boats start sharp in these flood-tides. Trains from Portsmouth? Well, he doesn't know for certain—believes the last steamer from the island runs to catch the mail up."

"Something dreadful is certainly going on," remarks Loo Childers, pausing in her flirtation with Lord Verreker. "Don't you think it might be as human for us to inquire what? Just look at the color of Mr. Theobald's face."

Lord Verreker, lifting his hand to his foolish lip, where one day there may be a moustache, lisps, "Yu-as—to be sure. Inquire, shall we?" And the pair rise. But by the time they reach Lady Rose (Loo prepared with charming platitudes adapted to any shade of condolence), Theobald is in the act of leaving.

No human being, not even the faithful friend Loo Childers, will ever know what were the last words spoken between Lady Rose Golightly and the man who was her lover once. But one trifling circumstance Miss Childers notes and remembers; perhaps may too accurately remember when the faithful friendship shall have gone the way of all mortal alliances. Lady Rose's handkerchief, a dainty perfumed morsel of lace and cambric, has fallen to the ground—fell there, doubtless, in the moment of her first graceful agitation—and Theobald's heel grinds it into the dust as he leaves her. A trifling circumstance, of which Theobald, I am quite sure, is unconscious. But poor Lady Rose—has not Lady Rose eyes to see and a heart to remember, as well as her friend Loo Childers?

She has more color in her cheek than usual, more animation in her expression. "Quite a sensational *dénouement*." Lord Barty and Colonel Desmond have by this time sauntered up, and Lady Rose finds herself in the position of narrator to the

whole party. "But so exactly what one might expect. People like Mrs. Theobald cannot even be ill without doing a little theatre. 'Martha Smith to Francis Theobald.' Oh, thanks," to Lord Verreker, who restores to her the dust-stained lace and cambric. "'A lady named Jane Theobald—'" and so on throughout the telegram.

Silence all round; then a low kind of whistle, unaccompanied by a singularly ill-pleased expression of face, on the part of Lord Barty Beaudesert.

"The question that naturally presents itself to an inquiring mind is, what was Mrs. Theobald doing at Ostend?" Loo Childers volunteers the observation.

"The question that presents itself to my mind is, was she there at all?" remarks Lord Barty Beaudesert.

"And to mine too," growls Harry Desmond with a ferocious pull at his thick moustache.

"And—and to mine," says the little lordling, thinking it savors of worldly wisdom to copy the cynicism of his elders.

"Whether she is or is not at Ostend, Mr. Theobald has flown to join her," says Lady Rose carelessly. "Poor man! The breathless haste in which he rushed off to catch the boat was really exemplary."

"Most exemplary, I've no doubt," sneers Lord Barty, looking sulkier and sulkier.

"And you and I may as well be turning our thoughts toward Mrs. Dulcimer, Loo. As the evening is tolerably cool, I suppose we may as well go?"

Loo assents, with a little look of command at Lord Verreker, and the two ladies prepare to start.

"I'll just tell you what I think, Rose," says Barty, unable to smother his ill-humor any longer. "Mr. Theobald is an old friend of yours, and I renewed my acquaintance with him to please you, so I don't want to be unnecessarily severe. But when a man wins the pot of money Theobald won last night, and gets a telegram enabling him to bolt with it, all I can say is, it's a — convenient sort of telegram, and a — shuffling, dirty trick for a man to play."

Thus Lord Barty Beaudesert, his finest feelings ruffled by even an apparent want of delicacy or honor on the part of an associate.

"Oh, come, Barty, it never does to look too closely into other people's domestic

concerns," answers Lady Rose lightly. "I suppose, in all cases of really happy wedlock, husbands and wives understand each other pretty well."

"I should like to know how much of my money the fellow has got in his pocket at this moment," growls Lord Barty.

"I should like," says Loo Childers, "to know what Mrs. Theobald was doing at Ostend."

"And I," says Lady Rose with a little well-dissembled yawn, "should like, if possible, to forget the whole subject. We have troubled ourselves about Mr. and Mrs. Theobald's domestic concerns for at least five consecutive minutes. Come, Loo," putting her hand within her friend's arm, "if we really mean to go to Mrs. Dulcimer's, it is time for us to talk toilets."

And so the ladies depart. Good-by, Lady Rose. May you enjoy your ball. May you enjoy the watches of the night—the watches of many another "dead unhappy" future night that shall succeed.

CHAPTER XLIV

THE CLOSING SCENE.

In the room of a foreign hotel my story opened; in the room of a foreign lodging-house it comes to an end. A cleanly furnished little bedroom, with nasturtiums twining round the window-sill, an engraving or two from Rubens's pictures on the walls; a narrow bed with a girl's face resting, awfully white and still and shrunken, upon the pillow.

The window is open, and from her bed Jane can see a square of blue sky framed round by the glowing orange petals and emerald leaves of the nasturtium. The angelus is sounding from some neighboring church or convent. A bunch of flowers upon the mantel-shelf fill all the sick-room with their faint, sweet autumn odor.

Jane lies white, still, shrunken, but painless—no longer racked by fierce tortures in limbs or chest, no longer pursued by delirious horrors of the brain. What has been her disease? What in three cruel weeks has brought all that brilliant health and youth and bloom of hers to this? The little Flemish doctor here in Ostend calls it by one long Latin name; the grand English physician summoned to consultation from Brussels by another.

It must have originated in great mental excitement. It must have originated in exposure to wet and cold. For, having facts laid before them, it is surprising how your really clever doctors will find theories to account for them. The truth would seem to be that Jane Theobald has had nearly twenty years of life, and is to have no more. And, when it comes to this, any technical difference in Latin names really matters slightly to the person most concerned.

Nearly twenty years of life! She is alone—Theobald, to humor her, having gone or promised to go into the fresh air—and looking up at the sky and listening to the angelus, thinks for awhile over those bygone twenty years. Then, with the prescience that comes to us with exceeding bodily weakness, comes to us oftenest when prescience is no longer of much practical use, she looks onward to the future.

Distinctly she can see it. Theobald given back to his own class in life, Blossy brought up "as a lady," herself forgotten. No, a thousand times no! Never that. Herself remembered by Theobald as one who loved much, sinned much, died—well, we may say opportunely—and whom he forgave, tended, cherished with tenderness all beyond her deserts, to the last. But upon this her hands go to her face, the hot tears start, and with a pang of bitterness unutterable Jane realizes how dear life is—how closely, eagerly she clings to the hope of life yet.

Blossy is well, in London, with Uncle Dick; "perfectly happy and at home," Min's last letter said, "and learning already to play the trombone." It is not because of the child that she yearns for life. She yearns for it passionately, despite this deathly weakness that assails her, because of Theobald. The child can have no second mother; but Theobald—the tears course each other down her cheeks, her wasted frame quivers! Even death itself the jealousy of this poor ignorant soul can transcend!

A hushed step sounds; the door opens, shuts, and Theobald comes up to her bed. Theobald, pale, haggard, unshorn; with eyes hollow from much watching; all his dandyism, all his Dundrearyism gone.

"What, Jenny, tears?" In an instant his arms are around her; with all the small strength she possesses she has lifted

herself to his embrace. "So this is the use you make of your liberty, the first time you have been left alone!"

"I know, Theobald, I'm a fool. The bells set me thinking. I was just—just wondering how Blossy is getting on."

"By Min's account Bloss was never happier in her life; but if you would like to have her here—"

"Oh, no. We are better as we are, alone. I'm glad"—after a little tired pause, this; Jane speaks but few words at a time, and these few faintly—"I'm glad you sent the child to Uncle Dick—poor old fellow!"

"I thought it was what you would have wished, Jenny. Charlotte was very good." Theobald's glass goes to his eye instinctively, at the mention of his sister Charlotte. "When they first heard of your illness Charlotte telegraphed to propose that she should come and nurse you"—Jane gives a little shudder—"and that the child should go to Anne. But I settled it differently. Indeed, I had already written to Uncle Dick to take her."

"Is all that long ago, my dear? Have I been long here?"

"You have been here three weeks, Jane; but we needn't talk about anything that is past now. The past is done with."

"Very nearly, isn't it? The past ended for me, I think, when I saw the lights fade in Dover harbor. They took me to the cabin, I remember, and I got faint—and Mrs. Smith held my hand, and then everything's blank till I woke up here with you. How good it was of you to come over to me so quick, Theobald!"

"Oh, Jane, child, don't let us speak about my goodness," is Theobald's answer.

And then there is silence.

Since she rallied—since the fever left her, rather; there has been no rallying of strength—Jane will often lie for an hour together supported by Theobald's arm, neither of them speaking. But to-night she seems more restless. Her cheeks during the last minute have got the color in them again that Theobald dreads. A sort of excitement is in her eyes.

"Raise me a little," she says to him after a time. "Raise me and hold me up, sitting. I want to see how I look in that glass opposite."

He obeys her, with difficulty; how grim-

ly, tenderly—to raise a thing so wasted is not an easy task; and she looks at her own image long and wistfully.

Shrunken though she be from all her fine proportions, her hair cut short to her head, the skin turned to waxen paleness, a stranger seeing Jane for the first time at this moment would say, there was a pretty woman, or the wreck of one. Something sweet and original and picturesque makes her Jane Theobald still, in spite of all that she has lost.

She looks at herself, then round into Theobald's face, and laughs. A poor little ghost of a laugh, yet it does him good to hear it—once more to hear a laugh of any kind from Jane's lips.

"What a hideous scarecrow! Theobald, I am not human."

He answers, as he answers nine out of ten of her remarks, by a kiss.

"You wouldn't find it easy to pin roses among my beauteous locks now. I should have to take, like Mrs. Coventry Brown, to tin tacks or glue."

Should have. Oh, the agony of hearing that conditional tense from lips we love! Theobald's heart sinks down again to zero.

"You don't pay me any compliments. You are not like my poor little good Samaritan, Mrs. Smith. Mrs. Smith did her best to cheer me this morning. 'I had a cousin Min'—though she were dying Jane must be an actress still; the voice that speaks is Mrs. Smith's—"cousin Min who had the rheumatic fever as bad as you, and lived years after, and never got the use of her limbs, and weak-like in her intellect.' Theobald, if I recover, I hope I shan't be 'weak-like in my intellect.'

"Don't jest, Jane, don't jest! I can't bear to hear it."

He lays her tenderly down upon her pillow, rests his face by hers, and soon Jane feels tears that are not her own upon her cheek.

—I have never depicted Francis Theobald in any favorable light. I have shown him to be weak, selfish, indolent; a gambler; not too exemplary a husband; not up to the mark, it may be, if judged only by the world's code of honor. Yet even in this man there must be good. Even Francis Theobald cannot surely be all scum, all froth, inasmuch as he can love and suffer yet.

And make no mistake as to his position. Do not think that Theobald holds Jane to his heart, sorrows over her as a man without hope, "not knowing." Theobald knows all. Knows the whole story of Jane's meditated sin against him, painted in colors black as night by Jane herself. During the wild days and nights of her fever, her delirious ramblings (scarce a sentence of which but contained his name and Lady Rose's) told him much. With her first return to reason, with the first coherent words she uttered, he knows all. Truth is strong in her as love; looking with her wan eyes into his eyes, both were poured forth to him together. And his answer was—to take her closer than before to his breast, and forgive her! Not altogether what a man of stoic principles would have done, thus placed. But Francis Theobald, we have long known, has no principles worth speaking of. At all events, he forgave her. And with this crowning weakness of his weak unbalanced life I, for one, am not disposed to quarrel.

"Theobald," says she softly, after another silence, "there's just one thing I want to say to you. I should like to have it out to-night."

"Not to-night, Jenny. To-morrow you will be stronger. You know what the doctors say about your being excited toward evening."

"I know. 'Madame is apt to get excited toward evening,' say you solemnly. 'Then take the greatest care madame does not get excited toward evening,' answer the doctors, solemn still. However, what I'm going to say now won't excite me a bit. Theobald"—holding his hand between both her own and looking at him fixedly—"I don't want to die."

Francis Theobald's glass goes to his eye. "There's deuced little in this world for any one to want to live for," he remarks drearily.

"If I was sure—certain—that my death wouldn't be for the best—But of course it would set you free; and then if ever she gets free, as I dare say people like that can, and—"

"What are you talking of, my poor child?" says Theobald as Jane falters, but holds his hand tighter and tighter in her own. "'If ever she gets free!' Whom do you mean by 'she'?"

"I mean Lady Rose," cries Jane with a gasp. "Now that I've had courage to say it, I shall be better. Theobald, some day when—when all this is over, and when Mr. Golightly is got rid of, you will marry her."

"If Mr. Golightly were got rid of," says Theobald, speaking more in his natural voice than he has spoken for days, "and if Lady Rose had a hundred thousand pounds, and I might marry her next moment, I would not marry her. I would rather break stones on the road than spend my life with Lady Rose."

"And yet—"

"Jenny, let us have no more 'and yets.' Haven't we agreed that the past is done with? We are to go back to the old vagabond days, Jane, you and I. I mean to sell Theobalds—I mean that Chalkshire and everything belonging to Chalkshire shall be as though they had never been."

For a minute she is silent. Then a light that makes her look almost like the Jane Theobald she once was trembles over all her worn, white face.

"The old vagabond days—you and me alone again? Theobald, never mind the doctors. I can't die. I don't think I'm a coward. As long as I could hold your hand I'd go anywhere in this world or the next. That wouldn't be death. But not alone. Oh, my dear, put your arms round me—close. Love me, and I shall live. Love me, Theobald, me alone in the whole world, and I shall cheat the doctors yet."

And she kept her word, reader; she lives. The men of science found another many-syllabled Latin word for the cause of her miraculous recovery. I think myself the four letters L O V E spell it in simple English. Houseless, vagabond, "unvisited," Jane lives, and is a supremely happy woman at this hour.

THE END.

OUR MONTHLY GOSSIP.

THE French people are doing their best to win back the good opinion of the world by showing that they still have money in their purses and a modicum of good sense—*le vieux bons sens françois*—in their brains. Being the most economical people in Europe, consuming less and saving more than any other, they have contrived apparently to hoard while undergoing the process of fleecing, and when thought to be starving were in fact waiting for opportunities of investment. To the *bourgeoisie* there is no security like that of the *Grand Livre*—the financial symbol of the permanence of the nation amid all the mutations of rule and all the vicissitudes of fortune. The eagerness with which the loan has been taken is an indication, therefore, of national vitality and self-confidence, but not of a belief that the era of revolutions is ended and that a stable political system is about to be established.

But the issue of the supplementary elections does afford a glimpse of hope—a promise that the next leap will at least not be made in haste or in the dark—an assurance that the intelligence of the country will have an opportunity of being heard and a chance of prevailing over the bigotry of the Legitimists, the fanaticism of the Reds, the rascality of the Bonapartists, the ignorance and stupidity common to all factions. Calm reflection and real deliberation will, we have little doubt, lead to the establishment of a republican government. All other systems have had their day; but it is now generally admitted that the Republic has never had a fair trial in France. "Born in bitterness and nurtured in convulsions," it has always had to struggle fiercely for existence, inspiring fear and hate, associated with turbulence and destruction. Under happier auspices it may yet gain a secure hold on the affections of the nation.

"LES BRAVES BELGES."

IF there is a country in Europe which more than any other presents the spectacle of past greatness and present insignificance, that country is Belgium. Had it fallen into ruin like Italy, or become a desert like Spain, there might be some dignity or pathos in its decline; but throughout the land are to be seen everywhere vast manufactories, iron-foundries, railways in all directions, quantities of shipping, and other signs of material prosperity, borne out by the thriving aspect of the people: they are well clad, well housed, and look well fed. Yet who cares for Belgium? Who knows anything about her since she left her sister provinces to their fate in 1581, finding it less troublesome to wear chains than to break them? As the mind travels downward from early times, the Belgian roll of honor unfolds a long list of great names, from the mayors of the palace and their descendant, Charlemagne, through the crusading counts of Flanders, kings of Jerusalem and emperors of Constantinople, to the powerful dukes of Burgundy and the mighty emperors of Austria, ending with the host of patriots who fell in the struggle against the Spaniards. But for three hundred years the history of Belgium has been made by other nations. In 1830, it is true, taking advantage of the general *mélée*, she wriggled herself loose from Holland, to whom she had been united in the reconstruction of Europe after Waterloo, but even then had to call in the French and English to pull her through.

Nothing diminished in their own eyes, however, the *braves Belges* embellish their cities, pursue their gains and make monuments to themselves, for the most part celebrating people or events of many centuries ago, such as Godfrey of Bouillon. They make as much as possible of 1830-'31: two imposing col-

umns in Brussels commemorate those years, from one of which the surrounding square is called La Place des Martyrs. A French writer has well said that the true Place des Martyrs is the square before the town-hall, where Counts Egmont and Horn were executed in 1568. Brussels has been called a little Paris, and its beautiful broad streets, pretty parks and public gardens, gay shops, good theatres, fine houses, handsome restaurants and cafés, dashing equipages and elegant women—above all, the general air of newness—give it a certain resemblance to the Paris which is now no more. But the market-place is not new, and is not cosmopolitan. It is a fine area, once the scene of tilts and tournaments, surrounded by large buildings of the sixteenth century, with gabled roofs and façades covered with carving and gilding: the magnificent town-hall, with its tall, slender spire, a marvel of richness and airy grace, occupies nearly a whole side of the square, and facing it is the monument to Egmont and Horn, just where their scaffold stood. As one leaves the busy streets of the gay modern city and approaches this spot, so little changed by ages, memory thrilling with the tragic story which Prescott and Motley have made so familiar, it is startling to see the figures of the doomed men standing there in stone high above the heads of the crowd, gazing out over the square as when they looked their last on earth and sky. A flower-sale is held weekly on the stones once stained with their blood. One meets these contrasts at every step on the Continent: familiarity destroys their force for Europeans, but Americans, with their souls attuned to the past, often find this sudden thrusting forward of the present very dissonant. Sometimes the effect is merely ludicrous. Mechlin is one of the towns of Belgium from which the life as well as the glory has departed. It has always been fatally conservative: in the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries it would not allow the great canal from Antwerp to Brussels to pass through it, and in the nineteenth shut its gates against the railway; and chiefly from

this cause has lost everything, even to the manufacture of its exquisite lace—Point de Malines—which has almost entirely passed to Brussels. As I stood in the middle of the deserted cathedral-square, beside the statue of Margaret of Austria (the first Margaret), regent of the Netherlands, the clock of St. Rombold's, a church of the twelfth century, struck twelve, and suddenly the chimes burst forth with "Le Sabre de Mon Père." The small bells rang a saucy treble, the big bells boomed a lusty bass, the whole peal seemed to swing out the rakish tune with a full sense of the joke. "Voici le sabre, le sabre, le sabre," shouted all the brazen tongues, until the quarter struck and quiet reigned again over the grass-grown streets. After wandering about among the antiquities of Louvain in company with the shades of the sixteenth century, it would have been less startling to meet the ghost of Don John of Austria in the quiet little dining-room of the restaurant than what I did find there—a lithographic birdseye view of Philadelphia.

Every Belgian town has a chime of bells, and their far-sounding melodies are pleasant to hear: besides the chimes, there is generally a lofty steeple, or belfry, where they hang, and a town-hall, sculptured, chased and chiseled like a huge jewel-casket, for the old Flemings wrought in stone as the gold and silver smiths of their day did in precious metals, and carved it to the delicacy of lace. The town-hall, monument of ancient liberties and privileges long obsolete, and theatre of many a stormy scene, usually fronts on an open space in the older part of the town, and the citadel, market-house, guild-halls, cathedral or principal church, and quaint, gabled dwellings, stand about it in stately order, holding aloof from the modern houses, shops, hotels, factories and foundries, which form separate quarters. The streets are intersected by clear canals, bordered with fine old trees, and the vista commonly closes with that picturesque object, a windmill. The churches are full of fine paintings, gorgeous stain-

ed-glass windows and wood-carving of wonderful richness and expression, and not seldom boast a miraculous picture or image. In the fine church of St. Peter at Louvain there is a crucifix which caught a robber and held him fast until human help came. Roman Catholicism in its ultramontane form reigns in this land, which suffered such incredible horrors at its hands. The recent honors of St. Joseph have called forth various exhibitions of devoutness. Across the exquisite rood-screen of the last-named church is emblazoned the inscription: "Salus noster Joseph in manu tua est." The new festival of the Patronage of St. Joseph, on the 30th April, was celebrated throughout Belgium by pilgrimages, processions and special services: his figure was placed in a conspicuous position before the high altar in the principal churches, with the infant Christ in his arms—a trust which must astonish the worthy man, after being withheld for over eighteen hundred years. As I was reading in the town library at Antwerp, a very respectable woman came in and asked the librarian for *some book* which would tell her about the patriarch Joseph and his brethren. A room in the house—of which she was apparently house-keeper—was hung with tapestry, she said, representing his history, and visitors often asked questions about it: she had read it at school, but could not remember all the particulars. The librarian, after some thought, found a safe book containing the account.

The *braves Belges* have been entirely in favor of the French during the late war—one can hardly tell why, nor can they. Last autumn four of them were commenting on a recent Prussian victory in no friendly spirit, but wound up with this singular conclusion: "Well, if things had gone the other way, we should have been French subjects by this time: there's no doubt of that;" and the rest repeated in chorus, "No, there's no doubt of that." That Brussels is at the present moment overflowing with Parisian refugees, as in 1790, is rather a proof that the French like

Belgium than that the Belgians like France; but the latter do not attempt to disguise their sympathy: the tone of society, the newspapers, the prints in the shop-windows, the Marseillaise whistled in the streets, even of the provincial towns, are proofs small and great of the universal feeling. The profusion of decorations in Belgium is bewildering. Sterne's chevalier of St. Louis, who sold little tarts, would find a large confraternity in the Netherlands. As there are few warlike feats to reward, these innumerable bits of red ribbon are merely exalted red tape. Nobody can spend even a short time within their borders without noticing their pacific spirit. The only blows we witnessed in more than a month's sojourn were when a big fellow fought a little one, several set upon one, or a boy struck a girl. Unfortunately, this sort of thing may be seen in all countries, but here it seems to be the only form of street warfare. Yet for boorishness, rudeness, insolence in return for a civil inquiry or request, especially if the querist be a woman, a foreigner and alone, there are no people like the *braves Belges*. One day I saw a brougham in which were a lady and gentleman, both very well dressed and quite striking in their appearance—he of course *décoré*. The horse became restive and unmanageable: in the twinkling of an eye the gentleman was out of the carriage and safe on the sidewalk, whither he peremptorily motioned the lady to follow. I was reminded of Charles Reade's story of the young lady and her lover who were running away from a mad bull, and the lover got over the fence first.

The Belgian men are not fine-looking: the women, even of the lower classes, are decidedly pretty, with tolerably good features, plump, trim figures, and for the most part fresh, fair complexions and waving, light-brown hair. But the finest animal of that country is the cart horse: it is a magnificent beast; nearer the size of an ordinary elephant than an ordinary horse, but nobly built, with superb mane and tail. It is used exclusively

for draught: in all Belgian towns the cab horses are wretched beasts: a stand of carriages offers specimens of every ill to which horseflesh is heir, and beyond veterinary aid. The horses in private carriages are often good, but the finest team I saw was a four-in-hand in a handsome stagecoach marked "Waterloo," crossing the principal square in Brussels. There was a knowing-looking coachman on the box, and a smart guard playing "A Fine Old English Gentleman" on his horn. The whole affair is English: the coachman is a young English gentleman with a taste for horses; the guard, another young English gentleman with a taste for music perhaps. They call every morning at the hotels for passengers for Waterloo, the sight of which may be agreeable to them as proof of what Englishmen could *once* do. In all the Netherlands there is no spot of which the *braves Belges* have less cause to be proud.

SARAH B. WISTER.

From Saint Pauls Magazine.
OUTSIDE THE PORTE DES CAPUCINS.

I.

THE quaint white gateway, with black-capped round towers on each side, comes at the bottom of a straggling street, and suddenly ends the town.

Pass under the gloomy archway, and you find yourself at once among trees and green meadows. There is not so much as a cottage to let you down gently to solitude — to form a link between town and country. The gateway itself helps this abruptness ; on the town-side a few clinging ivy wreaths throw themselves from the adjoining house timidly, as if they knew how incongruous is their grace with the severe dungeon-like architecture. But outside the Portes des Capucins there is nothing so suggestive of inhabited life, tufts of grass wave from niches where a fragment of masonry has broken away, and near the top of the gateway a flaunting snap-dragon, emblem of gaudy poverty, mocks the fallen power and pride of the tyrant Spaniard¹.

Right and left the city wall runs beside the dry grassed moat, with lime trees on each side ; and if one follows this in the sort of dream that the sudden transition has created, one rouses suddenly beside a canal, with steep green banks, and a raised towing-path overshadowed with huge trees : fields stretch away beyond these trees, flat low-lying meadows with a poplar fringe.

It is not solitary on the towing-path ; the wooden steps made in the steep bank have most of them a washerwoman or two, with blue tucked-up skirts, and bright handkerchiefs over their caps ; they chat merrily as they beat the snowy linen, and then plunge it in the freely flowing water ; sometimes they call shrilly from one flight of steps to another, and exchange volleys of repartee, at the expense, it may be, of some unlucky fisherman who has nothing but eels to show for his day's sport in the well-stocked canal.

But now the washerwomen have all departed, the last golden gleam has faded off the water : the dragon-flies, who do not care to dart about unless they can show their bodies gilded, have gone to sleep ; frogs croak hoarsely in that sedgy field on the right of the towing-path ; there is still the drowsy hum of insect life. In the fast dimming grey light, one sees every now and then a fish leap out of the water and fall back with a splash.

And now the fish are still ; if they splash ever so loudly, the sound could not reach the towing-path ; a huge barge comes slowly along, and the tinkle, tinkle, and heavy tramp give warning of the approach of a

stout Flemish horse, with gleaming scarlet fringe and tassels.

A tall young man has been walking at a fast-swinging pace from the Porte des Capucins while you have been reading this account of his walk, and now he looks impatient, as he steps down to the waste grass beside the towing-path, to make way for the horse and the straining rope by which he tugs the barge. The young man is heated with his walk, he takes off his felt hat, and shows a pleasant, thoughtful face : it is handsome possibly, but there is no use in saying so, — one can only give, like Olivia, certain items to judge by. Auguste le Blaçc is tall, slender for his great height, graceful rather than robust, but he does not look effeminate ; his bronzed face and curling chestnut beard, his firm springing tread, all speak of manly vigour ; and this accords with a certain seriousness of expression in his clear grey eyes and his well-formed mouth, an expression contradicted so totally by his smile, that the whole man seems sometimes to undergo a transformation. He was smiling a minute ago, just before he heard the bells of the towing-horse. Looking at him then, one thought, " He is a young fellow ready for any frolic, as joyous as a schoolboy :" the sudden interruption has pulled up the rein of his happy thoughts — he is as grave as a judge.

" Peste ! " he says to himself, " the barge will reach the cottage just as I do, and Georgette will not come out to greet me in sight of the bargeman."

He hurries on in spite of this reflection, and actually he has got to the cottage before the barge comes up.

That is to say, he is close to the little dwelling where Georgette Jamard lives with her mother ; but one may go along the towing-path, even in broad daylight, without discovering the cottage. A clump of plane trees bars the way between the path and the hedge down to which the waste grass slopes ; far reaching branches hide all that lies down in the hollow. Behind the plane trees there is a stile in the aforesaid hedge ; and, looking over this, one sees a little farmstead, with a cabbage-garden in front and a field of mangolds and turnips beside it ; there is a hemp-field, too, behind the cottage, but one cannot distinguish that in the indistinct light, for the trees make the sloping ground gloomy.

A slight rustling under the trees, and a glimpse of quickly-moving garments — Auguste springs forward. " Georgette," he says, and he snatches the fugitive's hand.

" Let me go. I am not Georgette," in a sullen, choked voice.

Auguste looked down, — a half-vexed, half-amused smile on his face; but, as the girl struggled, he grew serious.

"Célie, what ails you? Why are you so changed to me? — what have I done to vex you, my girl?"

Célie's head drooped, so that he could no longer see her face. "Don't tease me," she said crossly; "Georgette has been expecting you this half hour."

Auguste left her at once. He was over the stile before the barge had passed the plane trees. The small, slight creature he had left crept close up to one of the trees, and put both arms round the trunk. She pressed closely against it, — she was trying to stifle sobs that began to labour for utterance. These, and her passionate thoughts, were almost choking Célie Vandenberg.

Presently she loosed the tree, and drew a deep breath. She was small and slender, as brown as a gipsy, — a golden brown against the white and yellow-striped gown she wore. Her hair had got roughened, and fell loosely over her eyes, — large, bright, and dark, — with darkness round them, that made their expression sullen as she looked fixedly at the canal. "Why don't I fall in, and drown myself at once, I wonder? Only because I'm a coward; it is not for fear of grieving any one." She stopped, and shuddered at her own words. "Bah! who would grieve for me? La mère Jamard a day, perhaps a week; for she is a good woman though she has a cold heart. But Georgette hates me; and yet she has all she wishes for. . Auguste was my friend till he saw her, and now he only pities me." She stopped, a long, sobbing sigh burst from her, and finished the sentence.

She came out from under the plane trees, and stood on the towing-path. In the dim olive light her figure looked larger than it was. Célie Vandenberg was just below middle height, but so well proportioned that there was nothing special to call attention to her want of stature; neither at first sight was there anything attractive to be seen in her. She had a wide mouth, a very ordinary nose, inclined to turn up, and high cheek-bones; her complexion and eyes alone made her remarkable; but just now, as she stood trembling with suppressed feeling, it was easy to note that the quivering, flexible lips were full of passionate meaning, and that the dilated nostrils were well and delicately formed. Her hair, wild and gipsy-like as it was, was luxuriant, and full of rich colour. It seemed as if the large lustrous eyes might have a better, softer expression, — there was such depth in their darkness.

"Why has life grown so wretched for me, I wonder; and why have I grown to feel so changed, — so wicked? I used to want Madame Jamard to love me, but I gave that up long ago; and Georgette could not love any one but herself, — at least, I have thought so lately; and — and — Auguste. When I was a child he was so good to me." A warm flush came on her cheeks, her eyes softened, and the long lashes drooped over them, — for a minute beauty shone out of the sad, sombre face. But it did not stay there. Célie did not know what ailed her; but she knew, at least, that the thought of Auguste le Blanc always left a pain behind it. She went back to the plane trees, took up a basket, and turned to go to Mechlin.

"I might have been there by now," she said, "if I had not been idiot enough to wait and see whether he would keep his word to Georgette. His word to Georgette — Bah! as if he ever breaks it to her."

There was no trace of beauty in Célie's face by the time she reached the Porte des Capucins; her dark eyelids drooped heavily, it seemed as if the eyes themselves sent their depth of colour through the clear golden skin.

II.

THE cottage was a small poor place enough. There were but four rooms in it. Madame's parlour, with a curtained alcove, was on one side of the door, the kitchen on the other; over the kitchen a small room with two beds for Georgette and Célie; and over Madame's parlour a much larger, prettier bed-chamber, with white dimity hangings, a mirror in a gilt frame, and an armoire in walnut-wood. No one entered this room but Madame Jamard. No one knew what bitter tears the hard-faced woman, so cold to all the world, shed there in secret for the far-away profligate boy who had left her five years ago. Georgette sometimes remonstrated.

"It is useless to keep that nice room empty, and to cramp me in with Célie. I think it is a folly."

But the answer was always the same.

"You do very well where you are, Georgette. This room may be wanted soon, and I must keep it ready."

Madame Jamard never uttered her son's name. She knew every one of his faults, and resented them with the bitter indignation a loyal conscientious spirit feels against the base and false; but it would have killed her to hear her Felix spoken against, and most of her old Mechlin gossips thought that the Widow Jamard had renounced her son for

ever. They were confirmed in this belief by the apparition of Célie Vandenberg at cottage.

To compensate the fraud her son had committed, Madame sold the business she had carried on in Mechlin so well and respectably after her husband's death, and settled in the little cottage beside the canal. She took Georgette away from school, and sent to Ghent for Célie Vandenberg, then a child of fourteen. Mechlin folk puzzled at this. It seemed strange that the widow should take up with a reduced way of living, and saddle herself with an extra mouth to feed. Besides, the little dark-eyed stranger had no claim on Madame; she was only the orphan child of an early friend.

"Ma foi! but Madame Jamard has a heart,—that must be allowed," said Madame Popot, the laundress beside the Grand Canal; "her sorrow has not made her selfish, though she is so unneighbourly."

But when the irrepressible dame ventured to compliment the Widow Jamard on her benevolence, she got a cold answer.

"You mistake, my friend. I want help in the house, and I want a companion for Georgette. Célie costs less than school does."

"No, she has not a heart, after all," said pink-faced Madame Popot; "she does all from calculation, not feeling. She is not near so proud of that handsome daughter Georgette as I am of my little niece Filine."

Looking at Georgette as she sits now listening to her lover, a triumphant light dancing in her eyes, and a soft rose-tint melting into her delicate creamy skin, one agrees with Madame Popot that Georgette Jamard is very handsome. She may perhaps, ten years hence, be too ample in her proportions; but at one-and-twenty she is perfect,—so tall and fair and stately, and yet with so many softer graces. Her sweet blue eyes look made for loving glances, her pouting rosy lips make her lover wish for Madame Jamard's absence; but as yet he is not an accepted lover.

"Did you meet Célie, M. le Blanc?" said Madame.

"I saw her."

Auguste has been troubled by the change in the orphan girl's manner, but he is too manly to speak of it; he has a warm pity for the poor dependent Célie, and would treat her like a brother if she only would let him.

Georgette looked slyly in her lover's face.

"Célie was cross to you,—aha! I know

she was. I never saw such a temper as Célie's is now. Was she ill-tempered when you knew her years ago in Ghent, M. le Blanc?"

"I knew very little of her."

Auguste did not care to talk of Célie to Georgette, but the words stirred up a memory: a dying man,—dying of fever,—and a young girl nursing him with a devotion and skill that seemed beyond her age. It was hard to reconcile the gentle sweetness that had struck him then, with the harsh abruptness of Célie's manner this evening.

A laugh from Georgette roused him. She had a soft musical laugh.

"Célie seems to absorb you deeply."

There was a tinge of raillery in her voice, and a flush came into Auguste's face, but he smiled as he looked at Georgette.

"I owe her much," he said in a low voice; "but for her I might never have known you."

Georgette blushed and looked down when she met his eyes. "She is an angel," the young man thought. He rose up and went to Madame Jamard.

"Madame, I solicit a few minutes' conversation with you at any time you may please to appoint."

He spoke with the utmost deference, but his looks were impatient. Madame gave a grim, superior smile.

"Go up-stairs, Georgette."

Georgette went up to her looking-glass as soon as she reached her room. She stood before it—not smiling, but studying every feature, every beauty, as if she had never seen them before. "How dreadful to be plain, like Célie for instance." A pout came to her lips—"Who could find pleasure in looking at her? Why does Auguste live in that out-of-the-world, old-fashioned Ghent? Antwerp even would be better. Our own little Mechlin is nearer the capital, Ghent is miles away. I shall not be happy till I am in Brussels. Well, we shall see." She opened her armoire, and began to arrange collars and ribbons in a steady, matter-of-fact manner, a manner strangely in contrast with that of the lover down-stairs, awaiting her mother's answer to his proposal.

Madame Jamard did not keep Auguste in suspense. She waited a minute while she rolled up her blue worsted ball and stuck her knitting-pins through it, and then she wrapped her half-finished stocking round the pins, and cleared her throat.

"Yes, monsieur," she looked at his glowing face, "all you say is fair and reasonable. If Georgette is willing, I am too."

Then she rose up in her usual stately fashion, and called her daughter down-stairs.

Some little while later, the lover found himself close to the Porte des Capucins. He did not know how he had got there; he saw nothing but the handsome blushing face he had left at the cottage; he heard only the sweet murmured consent that Georgette had given to his happiness. He was so absorbed that he nearly upset Célie and her basket.

"Ah, pardon; but you will pardon my rough carelessness, I believe you will even make excuse for it, Célie, when I tell you my great happiness."

Célie stood looking at him. The gas-lamp opposite the gate showed his face plainly.

"You guess it, I know." His voice was full of joyful agitation. "Georgette has promised to be my wife; be kind to me, Célie, won't you, and wish me success?"

Célie put her hand in his mechanically: she tried to speak, but her tongue felt stiff and motionless.

"You and I must be friends," Auguste went on, so full of his own thoughts that he scarcely noticed the girl's silence. "Good-bye, little one, in a month I hope to be in Mechlin; meantime, you will let Georgette talk to you of me; she will want a sympathising friend. You will, won't you?" He was getting impatient of her silence.

"Yes," said Célie, "I will let her talk." The kerchief projected over her face, and prevented the lamplight from falling on it.

"Good-bye," said Le Blanc; and he went on through the Porte des Capucins, without seeing the bitter smile that curved the young girl's lips.

The way had grown dark by the time Célie reached the towing-path, where the trees shut out the faint lingering of light. Here she stopped and pushed her hair out of her eyes. "Am I going mad," she thought, "or what is this strange torment that is changing my nature? Why do I feel evil to everybody? Father Pierre says that God is full of love, and I used to think so, but how can I think so now? Love is mercy, and I find none. My father, all I had in the world, is taken from me. I tried not to murmur: I have tried to be happy here, even to love Georgette. Well, I was happy, and I made my own misery." She clenched her hand as if she could strike herself, and walked on fast. "If I had not pointed out Auguste to Madam Jamard he would never have come here; he would never have loved Georgette. There is the torment," she went on passionately, "he does love Georgette, and he will marry her."

She hurried on. When she reached the stile she heaved an impatient sigh—she longed for another mile or so of road. The passion that raged within her found some vent in rapid movement; but she must go in, the parlour door was open. Madame called her as she passed.

"Ah ça, Célie, thou hast loitered too late, my child; it is not well for young girls to be out in such darkness."

Madame Jamard spoke bluntly, but she was never meaningly unkind, she said all that she meant to say at once and ended there. She went on in a different voice.

"Thou must give us joy, Célie. Monsieur le Blanc has been here to ask me for Georgette, and he is to marry her at the Saint Michel."

"The Saint Michel! in six weeks!" Célie said the words in a far-off, dreamy tone, she did not even glance at Georgette, who watched her steadily.

"Well, Célie, hast thou nothing to say?"

"You do not care for my congratulations, Georgette, but I am glad that your mother is satisfied."

She turned from the parlour door and took her basket into the kitchen.

"What is this?" asked Madame Jamard.

"Only Célie's ingratitude; she has no heart, no feeling even for thee, my mother."

"And yet," said Madame thoughtfully, "there is feeling in the child, or she would be better tempered; what can have changed her, she was so gentle and so good?"

III.

A MONTH passed away — Célie grew silent and more and more irritable. She did not know what ailed her. Georgette treated her still more scornfully, but the girl made no complaint. If she thought of Auguste, she would dwell on his conduct towards her, not once would she expose her own feelings to scrutiny, they were stifled, turned from. "I do not like him," she thought, "and so the thought of seeing him again is painful; yes, I must go away before he comes back to Georgette."

Sometimes in her saddest moods she would burst out laughing, or trifle with any one near her, she did not know why, she only felt dimly that she must get a shield between herself and a thought she dared not face. But as time went on, and day by day Georgette's wedding-day drew nearer, Célie felt, with the awful consciousness which, like the presence of a ghost, haunts us through closed eyelids, that this aversion from seeing Auguste le Blanc at the cottage was not dislike, it was some-

thing deeper, it was dread of herself and of her own conduct towards him as the affianced husband of Georgette.

It is market day in Mechlin. The Grande Place, with its quaint old Spanish Halles on one side and the stupendous tower of St. Rumbold opposite, is always picturesque. All round it are the step-gabled houses of many colours, pink and green and white-washed, having striped awnings in front with scarlet scalloped edges, awnings under which pippin-faced Belgians can indulge in the beer and dominoes they love, and in the midst the great grey stone statue of Archduchess Margaret. The round paving stones of the Place are hardly to be seen, they are so covered with scattered merchandise and the lanes of booths which the country folk set up. Some of these booths are full of woollen drapery, the owners sitting cross-legged among the goods under the shade of scarlet and orange blankets. The blankets gleam brilliant in the sunshine, and so do the wares on the counter below. Pails japanned in brilliant green and scarlet, pails with handles which serve as market buckets to the peasantry, bright rows of dazzling tin lamps, then brown and green jugs and basins, these last spread out on the hot stones. At the foot of the archduchess's statue a pretty sunburnt girl is crying herself hoarse by the repetition of "Mouchoirs, beaux mouchoirs en vraie batiste, à cinquante centimes la pièce." The said mouchoirs lie baking on the hot stones, and she alternates her cry by catching up one and trying it in a most enticing fashion round her pretty face; she comes to a pink one presently, and the effect is so bewitching that a sturdy countryman stops on his way and buys it for his Lise, busy just now at her fruit-stall beside the Halles. It is a busy, bustling, chattering, merry scene; sabots clatter over the round paving-stones, where scores of the quaint wooden shoes lie tied in couples ready to be sold; every one laughs, the sun shines down hotly over the Place as if he enjoyed the fun going on there. Some priests moving swiftly across the scene under green and scarlet umbrellas, and Célie with her basket on her arm, are the only quiet folk in the Place.

But the laughter and the quick, cheerful buzz only make Célie Vardenberg's heart heavier. She pushes through it all as if it injured her; there is a worn, irritable look on her thin face, and her eyes are larger and sadder than ever.

"In a fortnight!" she said to herself. "Shall I live to see it, or shall I die first?"

Only that morning she had asked Madame Jamard to let her take service at a farmhouse about a mile out; but Madame had refused.

"Thou art not strong enough for service, my child," was all the answer she had made to the girl's entreaty.

Even now Célie did not distinctly realise what ailed her. She was weary of herself and of those who surrounded her.

"La mère Jamard is as cold as a stone, and Georgette is in love with her own face, and I don't want to see Auguste again; he does not care for me; he has forgotten our old friendship. If he would leave me in peace it would be different. It is hateful to be patronized; and notice from a person who does not love you is patronage." The poor, proud heart was so tortured, that the body writhed with its pulsations.

She had just reached the Porte des Capucins, and memory brought back her last meeting there with Auguste. She saw him again as he had stood, looking so wistfully for her answer, with the lamplight falling full on his bronzed, noble face. Memory conquered, her heart swelled suddenly, and the tide of passionate love, so long repressed, broke through every barrier, and swept wildly over her. She stood still under the archway. The market was a centre of attraction to-day, and the street behind her was as still and empty as if its industrious inhabitants had been taking a siesta. A hot flush rose up in the girl's face, and reached her forehead; her shame was suffocating her. Shame and outraged pride. Literally, her sin had found her out. She who had so often proudly condemned Georgette's bold glances thrown at unwary youths to excite their admiration,—she who had all unknowingly made an idol of her own modesty,—found herself suddenly humbled into a sort of despair. Self-knowledge had come, with all its bitterness; but with Célie the bitterness had the added misery of degradation. It seemed to her that this passion, which she had no longer power to deny, for a man who had no thought of her, was sullying,—was in itself disgrace.

"Why did I not end my life before it came?" she said, in the deep agony that brought no tears, though it blanched her burning face, and made her shiver with cold. She tried to make excuse for herself. If Auguste had not been so kind to her in her father's illness, her thoughts would not have dwelt on him,—and how delighted he had looked that day she recognised him in Mechlin, when Madame Jamard made her speak to him so sorely against her will.

"I could almost think he loved me then."

He had never seen Georgette, and yet he walked all the way home with us."

And this autumn he had come of his own accord to the cottage, and had asked for Mademoiselle Vandenberg.

" And if he had seen me first, instead of Georgette, when he came,— who knows, who knows ! "

The miserable child crouched under the gloomy archway. It seemed to crush out the thought which had consoled her. What had Auguste said to her at their last meeting beside the Porte des Capucins ?

" If he had ever felt love for me, he could never have asked me to be the confidant of Elise. No, it has all been my own vain self-deceit. And yet, how can I say so ? I never knew it was love till to-day."

Steps and voices from the town came near the archway. Célie hurried through it, and then crept aside, that the new-comers might pass on in front. She was surprised to see Georgette. Her companion was a portly, middle-aged, well-dressed man. Neither of them noticed Célie ; they were too much occupied with one another,— Georgette smiling and blushing with delight at her companion's admiration. It was plain that he knew it would be well received. There was no timidity or deference in his manner.

Célie looked after them with scornful eyes, as they turned from the gate along a favourite walk of the Mechlin folk, in the opposite direction from that which led to the towing-path. She knew the man well enough. He was Monsieur Bernard, the rich ébéniste. The words she had heard showed her Georgette's faithlessness.

" Then you will spend the day after tomorrow with my sister? Bon. I will not take her back an excuse."

" And Georgette is weak enough to spend a whole day exposed to this man's admiration ; a man who was her lover before she knew Auguste, and Auguste does not like him. I heard him tell her he was not nearly so rich as Monsieur Bernard. That was the first time I felt sure Auguste meant to marry Georgette, and I wondered whether she could love well enough to be happy, without the hope of being rich. And I was right," said Célie, with a passionate glow in her eyes ; " Georgette cannot love ; if she could, she would not endure this man's flattery. She would feel every compliment he paid her an insult to Auguste. If she is not faithful to him now, how can she love him when she is his wife ! "

Poor little jealous Célie, if she had asked, " Will Auguste be entirely happy with a trifling, shallow woman ? " her question might have been more reasonable. It did

not occur to her that Georgette's nature had neither the passion nor the depth of her own, and that probably she would love any husband who might fall to her lot, according to her comprehension of the word. He would be hers, and therefore he would be something that ought to be cared for.

Célie went home much more quickly than usual. She wondered if Madame Jamard would inquire for Georgette ; but Madame was not within when she reached the cottage. Even when dinner-time came Madame did not return. " What can have happened ? " thought Célie. Madame so seldom left the cottage that wonder had in some degree absorbed and quieted the girl's agitation. Presently she saw Georgette come up to the little gate, and then nod back over her shoulder. Célie looked towards the plane trees, and saw some one standing beneath them. She felt sure it was Monsieur Bernard : but he was so much in shadow that she could not distinguish him. A sort of wild joy seized her. Her own love for Auguste was better, purer, than that of the vain beauty he had chosen for his wife. But she hardly gave this feeling time to breathe ; it was stifled in passionate anger against herself for her selfishness. Was she really mean enough, then, to find joy in Auguste's misery ? She turned round fiercely on Georgette when she came in.

" Are you not ashamed to let Monsieur Bernard pay open court to you when in a fortnight you will be another man's wife ? You are not honest, Georgette, or faithful either."

" Bah, bah, bah." For a moment Georgette blushed, and then she spoke angrily. " What do you mean ? You have been watching me then. Does Auguste employ you as a spy ? "

She had not meant her words, but they came back to her as she saw their effect. Célie turned ashy pale, and she caught at the table by which she stood. She uttered no cry, but the floor seemed to be moving under her feet in the sudden terror that had come to her. Georgette's glance, angry first, then scornful, changed into a stare of wonder.

" Ciel ! " She stood as speechless as Célie, while her cool brain was piecing together many little incomprehensible signs, and guessing at the secret to which they pointed.

Till now Auguste had not seemed so precious to Georgette. He was hers to take or leave as she chose ; but that Célie, her mother's poor dependent—Célie, for whose want of beauty she had always a word or a look of pitying contempt, should dare

to raise her thoughts to him, was not to be borne.

Célie spoke first.

"I am not a spy. I passed through the Porte des Capucins just before you did; all the world might have seen you permitting that bold man's admiration, and besides this, I have a right to speak. When he went away Monsieur le Blanc asked me to let you talk about him, he gave me his confidence, and I will not see him wronged."

Perhaps the consciousness that all disguise was over, gave her strength, but Célie had never spoken to Georgette in such a tone; she was startled at her own words, and at the silence with which they were received.

Georgette felt her advantage, and meant to use it. She understood the sensitive side of Célie's nature, and she enjoyed these reproaches which she considered gave her such ample provocation for reply.

"It appears to me," she said, and the look in her eyes brought the blood tingling to Célie's cheeks, "that Monsieur le Blanc" (she mimicked Célie's voice) "chose his friend well; but, my poor Célie, the part must have been a trying one, your interest in Monsieur le Blanc seems of the warmest. You insolent little upstart!" she said, in quite another tone; "You to reproach me for speaking to my old friend when you are guilty of the shamelessness of loving a man who never gave you a thought!"

Célie had covered her face with her hands.

"Hush, oh hush, for pity!" burst from her lips.

"Pity! you deserve so much," and Georgette laughed till the wretched girl, crouching beside the table, felt as if no infamy had equalled hers; "you thought to deceive me, Mademoiselle, but I see your whole stratagem. It would have been fine, would it not? to meet Auguste with a tale of my delinquencies, and of your own virtuous efforts in his favour; or did you think to affront me, and make me throw him over? No, no! you have spoiled your own market, little one; I mean to marry Auguste le Blanc, and if I were not quite decided before you have settled the matter —"

Célie uncovered her face; it was still agitated; but Georgette was surprised to see how firmly the girl met her scornful looks.

"You talk of stratagem, it is your own thoughts; you must think what you choose, but you shall not make me afraid of speaking. If you mean to marry Monsieur le Blanc," her cheeks grew hotter at the word, "you ought not to spend to-morrow at Mon-

sieur Bernard's, you ought not to do what you know he dislikes."

"He!" Georgette's eyes were full of scornful brightness, but Célie gave her no chance of reply. She went out into the cabbage-garden and looked along the tow-ing path for Madame Jamard. Her heart was beating up in her throat, she felt as if she had been acting falsely towards Auguste, while she had tried to be so true. She went down to the stile and stood leaning on it, her face hidden in her small brown hands.

"I know Georgette can never make him happy. Why do I try to keep her true to him? And yet how do I know? I may be wrong. Am I wrong, all wrong from the beginning?" The sudden doubt brought a yet more sorrow-struck look to the young face, with its dark earnest eyes and trem-blings lips. "Why have I thought so surely that I knew what would make Auguste happy? How do I know that he does not love Georgette's faults? Ah!" and her whole body writhed at the torture she was suffering. "I will not stay here for the Saint Michel; I will not! I must die any way soon, but it need not be here; he need never know my mad folly."

IV.

WHEN Célie went into Madame's sitting-room next morning, the curtains of the alcove were not withdrawn.

Madame Jamard was still in bed asleep, the girl thought, all was so quiet. She went about her usual duties, got the coffee ready; but Madame Jamard did not come into the kitchen. Georgette kept a scornful silence. She drank her coffee, and then went up to her bedroom.

About an hour afterwards Célie was busy shredding onions into the soup-pot, she heard her name faintly called.

She looked round. "Célie!" this time distinctly from Madame's room.

Célie put her knife down, and went across the little passage that separated the kitchen from the sitting-room.

Madame was sitting up in bed, shivering and yet deeply flushed.

"I am not well, Célie; bring my coffee here, but don't tell Georgette. I shall be better by-and-by."

The day wore on. Madame Jamard did not get up, and Georgette had apparently gone out, while Célie was occupied with her mother. In the afternoon Madame Jamard walked into the kitchen.

"I am all right again," she said; but Célie thought she looked strangely ill.

"Where is Georgette?" said Madame.

Célie felt sure that Georgette had gone to fulfil her engagement. Her every-day cloak was hanging on its peg, and so was the gown she had worn that morning. Célie was too proud to look, but she felt sure that Georgette had gone dressed in her best, to be gazed at by Auguste's rival. She only said,—

"She has gone to Mechlin, I think, to see some friends."

"Georgette is too fond of visiting." Madame Jamard spoke sternly. "A young girl should not be seen going about alone so near her marriage-day." Get me some dandelion, child; a salad will cool me."

"She is not well," thought Célie, and she went round to the back of the house to gather dandelion leaves.

But Madame Jamard's words filled her mind far more than Madame's illness did. "Marriage-day"—the words came mockingly, they seemed to dance round her, now whispering, now swelling into a laughing chorus, and with them came a new dread till now unfared. Georgette would tell Auguste of her own love for him.

"No, no, she cannot, it would be like murder; it would kill me where I stood," she shuddered, and kept silent. If this shame would kill her, then she deserved punishment for her unsought love. "But I did not make it," the words came at last in a passionate torrent, and her hands clasped together, while she walked rapidly up and down the little garden. "Oh, my God, thou only knowest how I have tried to stifle it, and tear it out from my very heart. I have tried all ways. No, I have not," a sudden calm came to help her; "I have not tried all ways, because I am a coward. If I had been firm Madame Jamard could not have kept me here against my will. I will go this moment and tell her I cannot stay."

She stooped to gather up the dandelion leaves. Rising again with full hands she met Auguste le Blanc coming round from the front of the cottage.

"Where is Georgette? I want the truth, and I shall get it from you, Célie." There was harsh anger in his voice, his stern resolved eyes seemed to draw her words from her. Célie felt in a dream. She had not yet realized that Auguste was actually in bodily presence beside her.

"Georgette has gone to Mechlin."

Anger flamed in his eyes. "Is there not one woman, then, who can answer without subterfuge? Are you all deceivers alike? At least I depended on you, Célie. Tell me where she is."

The girl's face glowed, and yet her pleas-

ure was mixed with subtle pain. "I am not deceiving you. I may think I know where Georgette is, but I may be wrong."

"You are right." Auguste spoke slowly, and then he drew his breath hard, and leaned against the wall of the cottage.

Célie stood trembling, something in Auguste made her feel farther from him than ever. She felt dimly that at that moment he was mad with love for Georgette.

He spoke again presently, but his voice had a muffled, choked sound.

"Just now as I came through Mechlin I thought I saw her, and then I could not believe it; it was but a glimpse, she was leaving a window. That fellow Bernard was at the window too. Oh, don't be afraid, Célie," he smiled, but he spoke as sternly as ever. "I know how you women cling together, and hide each other's falsehood. I don't ask you to tell me any tales of your friend; but you can tell her this from me: I am not going to be fooled after marriage, so it is best that all should end between us now."

A sudden fierce struggle raged in Célie's heart; she was as despairing as ever, and yet her joy was so tumultuous that she could have laughed out loudly. She looked up at Auguste.

His face was death-like. All the bright light had faded from his eyes. Célie's joy was over,—every feeling merged in tenderness; she must comfort him, she must help him to the happiness which he yearned for. What mattered all else balanced against his happiness? She smiled, and Auguste felt as if he saw a branch of hope held out in the midst of the distrust that had closed over him. Fragile as the girl was, there was the power in her face that only earnestness can give,—a power which helps others upward by its sympathy, instead of bearing them down by its intrusion of self.

"Are you quite just?" she said, and she smiled still.

Auguste felt as if a cool hand had been laid on his burning forehead. He longed to have Georgette proved innocent, but he would not show his eagerness.

"I don't understand what you mean."

But his eyes betrayed him to Célie. She stifled a sigh and went on,—too much one with him to show her knowledge of his feelings till he should choose to reveal them.

"I mean that you ought to let Georgette excuse herself to you before you give her up so suddenly. Monsieur Bernard's sister is her oldest friend."

"I had forgotten that," said the lover, thoughtfully, and though at the name a cloud of jealous anger darkened his face

again, yet passion pleaded loudly for Georgette, reproaching him for having blamed her in Célie's presence. "Look here, Célie," he said gently, "I must have gone off to Brussels to-night; as things are I shall go at once. Tell Georgette I will be back in a fortnight at furthest, and that I count on finding her here to meet me.

"Yes."

Célie stood still while he nodded, and even after he had crossed the atrile, she stood where Auguste had left her.

"How he loves her!" she murmured. "Surely such love must win hers in return."

And yet though it was bitter to think of Georgette as the wife of Auguste le Blanc, Célie felt more as she had felt at her father's death,—more at peace with herself and all around her. She gathered some fresh dandelion leaves, and took them into the kitchen to wash.

V.

CÉLIE had found Madame Jamard fainting, and at once started off for Mechlin.

The doctor came next morning. He said his patient was in danger,—she had low malignant fever; and then he looked at Célie and at Georgette, who had come home late the night before.

"You are both young nurses," he said. "Well, you must be all the more attentive, and make up for inexperience."

Georgette followed the doctor to the stile.

"Is my mother's malady infectious, Monsieur?"

"Decidedly," and then seeing all her bright colour fade, "but nurses are always safe, you know. Folks rarely come to harm in the path of duty. Au revoir, Mademoiselle." The doctor raised his hat and departed. "What a handsome, well-grown girl that is! What a lucky man her husband will be!"

Half-an-hour later, a tap at the door of the sick room startled Célie. She opened it quickly. There stood Georgette with the hood of her cloak drawn over her head, and a bundle in her arms. Célie stepped into the passage, and closed the door.

"I am so glad you are come. I want to go to Mechlin for the medicine, but I dare not leave your mother so long alone. But you have your cloak on. Will you go in my place, or will you stay beside her?"

Georgette drew herself away.

"I am going to Mechlin,—yes. I can send some one with the medicine, if you can tell me quickly what you want sent. I am in a hurry."

"But you are coming back, Georgette?"

Georgette turned her head away; she could not bear Célie's eyes.

"No; I am of no use. You understand sickness; you nursed your father. Let me go, Célie," she said sharply, as Célie took hold of her cloak. "I tell you I am frightened for infection. Oh! if I catch the fever I shall die. Let me go, I say."

Her voice rose in shrill terror, and Célie feared it would reach the sick-bed. She darted forward, and stood at the entrance-door, facing Georgette.

"You will not catch the fever. Oh, Georgette, you will never forgive yourself if you desert your good mother now — the doctor says she may not live; besides you will break faith with Auguste — remember the message I gave you last night."

"Let me pass, I say!" Georgette was crazy with terror, she pushed the girl aside, and ran quickly to the stile.

The fortnight passed by, but Célie had become so absorbed in watching over her patient that she had forgotten Auguste's visit. There are certain avocations which seem to come naturally to certain women,—nursing is one of these, and needlework and flirting and domestic administration are also among the natural gifts of womankind; and as folks are sure to be happy when they are in the sphere that fits them, Célie, spite of her long sleepless nights and untiring devotion, had experienced a peace and a mental restfulness in Madame Jamard's sick-room, which had been unknown to her since Auguste had loved Georgette.

Her own love was as fervent as ever, but the use she had been making of it, in her incessant tenderness of thought and deed for the suffering woman lying there in the alcove, had drawn it outwards, and so had eased her heart from its repressed burden of fiery torture.

Madame had slept nearly all day, the doctor had come in and looked at her, but had been very strict in ordering that she was to be left undisturbed. Célie sat beside her, with a sorrowful look on her face. While she was delirious Madame Jamard had talked only of her son, and Célie had learned how intense the poor mother's love still was, and how unworthily the son had rewarded it. She had grown drowsy sitting there, and she did not hear a tap at the front door. She started presently only half awake, and looked at the bed. Madame Jamard lay still, so calm and pale, but sound asleep.

"I thought she called me." Célie rubbed her eyes. "I must have slept too."

"Célie!"—before she had done speaking, and the blood flew up to the girl's

sunken cheeks at the voice that called her. She clasped her hands tightly together, then she went up to the looking-glass and took from it a little note just stuck into the gilt frame.

Auguste was standing at the entrance, his tall figure bent as he looked into the passage.

"Come round to the back," said Célie, in a quiet, gentle voice, that fell on his ear like a warning—it was so different from the Célie he had lately known. He followed in silence, and she told him of Madame Jamard's illness.

"But Georgette—she is well—where is she?"

"She is well and safe," and Célie's smile again brought peace to Auguste. "She is in Mechlin, but she wrote this message for you." She handed him the note which Georgette had sent on the day she left the cottage. Auguste read it eagerly.

"Célie,—I send you what you wanted, and also a boy who is not afraid, and who will help you. You will tell Auguste that I am with Madame Popot, beside the Grand Canal. I know he will approve my leaving you. I could not risk his happiness so near our marriage, and my fear would have made me very useless to you, and I know nothing about nursing."

Célie's eyes were fixed on Auguste as he read.

"What will he think? Will he forgive her for leaving her mother and then for inventing such a heartless excuse?" This thought had come to Célie often, and she had grown to think that Auguste—the Auguste enshrined in her heart—would find this last act of Georgette more unpardonable than her flirtations with Monsieur Bernard. Auguste raised his eyes from the note at last—he looked grave but not severe, Célie thought.

"She was quite right," he said; "it was very good of her only to think of my anxiety. I am glad she is with Madame Popot—it was a wise choice."

He was going away at once full of passionate eagerness to find Georgette, but as he held out his hand and took Célie's in it he felt it cold and trembling, and then he saw how ill and worn she looked.

"You are tired out," he said, "I will come and take your place to-night."

Célie's eyes swam with tears.

"How good you are!"—it was such happiness to look up once lovingly at Auguste without fear of betraying herself; "but indeed you must not. She is so much better that I too shall sleep to-night

—to-morrow she will be able to see and talk to you."

"God bless you!" Auguste spoke with the sudden warmth and full-heartedness that an act of pure unselfishness in a woman is sure to kindle in a man. He had largely that wonderful manly tenderness which no womanly softness can ever equal—it shone out at his eyes on Célie, and left her standing as it were in a flood of sunshine till he was out of sight. Then she leaned on the stile and sobbed as if her heart must burst through the throbbing bosom that held it.

"It is all over now,—all,—but I am glad, oh, so glad, I was kept from telling him the truth. How do I know what Georgette is towards Auguste? I see her and judge her with jealous eyes; she must love him, and if she loves, she will always be without fault for him."

VI.

It is some weeks after the St. Michel. Madame Jamard and Célie are sitting at needlework in the cottage parlour. The room has got back its old trimness, the medicine bottles and tea-spoons have vanished, there are new curtains to the alcove, and these are drawn closely; you would never guess that the pretty little salon with its vases of gay flowers and bright new chintz-covered furniture, had been a sick room so short a while ago. Only, if you look close at Madame Jamard's face you will see that the skin is far more delicate than it used to be, more like that of a person unused to open air and exercise; except for this delicacy of complexion, Célie has by far the most suffering face of the two women.

Madame sits looking at the face shadowed by its long, dark eye-lashes; she sighs as she notes the girl's hollow cheeks and slender wasted fingers. She puts her own work on the table, rises, and then she bends down and kisses Célie's forehead. The girl looked up, her cheeks glowing with surprise; before Madame could speak Célie had caught at her hand and pressed it fervently to her lips. Madame Jamard stroked her hair with the other hand, and then she sat down, this time close beside Célie.

"Célie!" There was a tremulous flutter in the hard, even voice. But Madame Jamard persevered; she had a duty to discharge. "You must be my own child now. You have saved my life, so you have the best right to me. My child,"—she smiled lovingly, for Célie had thrown both arms round her neck and kissed her, as the poor mother had not been kissed since her son went away,—"you must listen to me

quietly. I have been waiting an opportunity to talk to you ever since Georgette came back. She and Auguste will not be in for some time yet. Célie, when I was ill I talked about my boy?"

"Yes," and Célie looked embarrassed.

"Well, then," she looked at the girl's disturbed face, "I told you then, no doubt, why he went away; but now I must tell you more. On the day before my illness, the day I was out so long, I got a letter asking me to go to Brussels. I went, and in a poor dirty lodging I found the man who had written to me. He was very ill of the same fever I took from him; but he had in charge for me a letter from my Félix. A penitent letter, Célie, written just before he died." Célie looked up, her eyes full of loving sympathy, but the widow only stopped and cleared her throat. "There is no cause for sorrow, my child; rather for joy and thanksgiving; but, Célie, I can now tell you easily that which I ought to have told you long ago, but my stubborn pride held me back; while my Félix was still hardened I could not speak of his sin; it was he who ruined your father by counterfeiting his signature. You have a right to be not only my child, but the mistress of half I possess in the world."

"Ah, no!" Célie's arms crept softly round the widow's neck; "give me only the right to love you, my mother, and you give me all I want in this world."

Madame Jamard kissed her, and then she sat silent. She was exhausted by the avowal she had forced herself to make.

"Look out, and see if they are coming," she said after a while. "May God forgive both my children," said the widow Jamard, when Célie had gone out and shut the door behind her; "but I fear they have robbed her of all earthly blessings. I am sure now this girl loves Auguste, and who knows what might have happened if he had not seen Georgette? he seemed very fond of Célie that first day they met again in Mechlin. Georgette is handsome, and she will make a clever wife, but she has not Célie's heart. I must find a way." Madame got up and paced the little room.

When she stopped her face was less troubled. "Célie looks pale and fagged, a change will refresh her. I shall send her to Louvain till the wedding is over; my cousin Marie will make much of the girl."

The wedding was over; but for some days after it furnished talk for the gossips of Malines. Such a handsome couple as Auguste le Blanc and Georgette Jamard were not often married together. Madame

Popôt, the well-to-do laundress on the Grande Place, took a motherly pride in the bride's looks, and she went about singing her praise on all sides. She had been to see Madame Jamard, and was on her way home when, just outside the Porte des Capucins, she met with Mademoiselle Zénaïde Bernar, the sister of the rich ebéniste. Zénaïde is no longer young, her nose is sharp and reddish near the point, and her hard, black eyes look spitefully at the pink-faced Madame Popôt.

"Ah, bonjour!" says the good-natured washerwoman. "Does not Mademoiselle think our bride was perfect?"

"Your bride indeed!" Mademoiselle Bernard screws up her thin lips, and the red point quivers at the end of her nose.

Madame Popôt also grows red, but not only her nose, her whole face becomes suffused. She is easy-going, unless her dignity is disregarded, and then, *gare à vous*, Mademoiselle Zénaïde.

"And why not *my* bride, Mademoiselle? Has not Georgette, I ask you, been under my roof for three weeks? Have I not assisted in choosing the corbeille? Ma foi, you may ask M. le Blanc; why, he calls me his godmother."

Mademoiselle's lips are no longer to be seen, but the place where they should be has nearly touched her nose, and she closes her eyes with disdain.

"Monsieur le Blanc! He! he! he!" The laugh of Mademoiselle Zénaïde is like the squeak of a penny whistle. "Shall I tell you a secret about your bride, Madame Popôt?"

Madame Popôt was impetuous, but she was also inquisitive, and though her cheeks still flamed with anger, her ears tingled for the news.

"Madame le Blanc"—Zénaïde jerked out the name contemptuously—"was my friend years ago, and she wanted to marry my brother."

"Your brother! It is not possible. Why he's older than you are."

Mademoiselle grew pale. "Nevertheless, Madame, what I tell you is the reality. Georgette wanted to marry my brother, and she would have married him too. Monsieur Auguste may, indeed, be thankful to this fever, it has given him his wife. Georgette came running to us in her terror; she implored to be taken in—you were only an afterthought, Madame Popôt. But my brother's fear was too strong for his love. He left Georgette standing in the shop, and sent me to speak to her, and to beg her to go away. You should have seen her anger. After a few days my

brother saw Georgette ; but she would not make it up. He had wounded her vanity ; and for my part I think he is well rid of her. She has the temper of a vixen or a cat. You need not look incredulous. Many people saw Georgette come to us on that day. The doctor, above all, — you have only to ask him, and he will tell you that, but for the fever, the marriage would have gone on all the same ; only Georgette would have been Madame Bernard, instead of Madame le Blanc. Au revoir, Madame Popôt. I wish you joy of your bride."

Mademoiselle Bernard repeated her story with variations among her neighbours and

friends. Auguste had taken his wife home to Ghent, so the tale did not reach his ears at that time ; but Madame Jamard heard it and she sighed when she thought of Célie's love.

" Why are these crosses sent, and do they ever get righted in this life ? " said the widow to herself. " Georgette would have been happy with Monsieur Bernard, and all would have been well if she had not seen Auguste le Blanc. I am glad the child is still at Louvain, she will not hear this idle tale. She need never know it."

But the doctor had told it to Célie, while Madame Jamard lay unconscious on her sick-bed.

Macmillan's Magazine.

PATTY.

CHAPTER XXXI.

NUNA'S LETTER.

MISS MATTHEWS felt unusually excited when Mr. Bright left her. Something in Will's manner warned her that he had a special purpose in going to look for Nuna. It seemed to Elizabeth that the marriage was certain, and then her calm, practical mind began to calculate how soon the affair could be settled. For the question of marriage presented itself to Miss Matthews in what Nuna would have called upside-down fashion. Ways and means, all the machinery of arrangement, and possibility, and prudence, had first to be taken into account, and then sentiment between two people, or that which Miss Matthews called love, might come in when all the rest was settled. It seemed to her that in this affair of Will Bright there had been a superabundance of sentiment already ; the attachment had gone on quite long enough.

She watched eagerly for Nuna's return, but Nuna came in so quietly, that Miss Matthews missed her.

At dinner-time Nuna was too preoccupied to notice anything, but Miss Matthews saw that the Rector was suffering from unusual disquiet. These symptoms in father and daughter indicated some confidence from which she was excluded.

There was no active spirit of intrigue in Elizabeth's nature ; she would have considered it ill-bred to indulge such a spirit, but she meant to be all in all to Mr. Beaufort, and to be this she must know all his secrets.

And yet she could not question him ; delicacy and refinement alike kept her from asking the cause of his fretful looks and captious silence. She passed an anxious evening, and her placid face still looked perplexed when she came in to breakfast next morning. She had been in the garden gathering flowers for the Rector's writing-table, and Nuna and her father had had time to open their letters before she came in.

Miss Matthews looked from one to the other, and she saw that something unusual was happening. Nuna's face had flushed, and she was putting her letter away seemingly to avoid observation.

Her father held an open letter in his hand, but he was not looking at it. He was frowning most severely for him—frowning at Nuna.

While Miss Matthews sat studying the two faces, Nuna looked up suddenly and met her father's eyes. Her blush deepened, but it seemed to Elizabeth that the girl looked happy, spite of her evident confusion.

Whatever did it all mean ? She watched and waited, but neither father nor daughter gave her the least clue to their secret. The doubt of the previous day had now become a certainty to Miss Matthews ; she was sure that some secret existed of which she was ignorant.

The Rector was summoned to his study on parish business, and Nuna disappeared suddenly. Elizabeth's curiosity grew.

Later on in the morning she arrived, as she thought, at the gist of the whole matter. She saw Mr. Bright ride by the parsonage without turning his head.

"She refused him yesterday, then !" and for a moment surprise quite mastered Miss Matthews ; and then she reflected. "Nuna never had any common sense, and therefore she is not likely to understand her own feelings or what is best for her." Miss Matthews felt that she must speak to Mr. Beaufort : Nuna must end by marrying Mr. Bright.

Coining in from the garden she met the Rector ; so evidently vexed that she ventured to express her sympathy.

"I'm afraid you are worried,"—she spoke in the purring, child-like way that goes straight to the confidence of some men,—“and worry is not good for you, is it ? I wish I could be of any use to you ; but I am afraid women can only soothe ; they have not brains enough to be of real assistance to wise men like you."

Elizabeth looked positively sweet.

"I don't know ; I don't know, I'm sure : perhaps not, and yet this is a woman's matter. My nerves have gone through an amount of exhaustion within the last four-and-twenty hours which it will take weeks to counteract the effect of. No one who has not studied the subject as I have done, can conceive how great is the waste of physical energy and health caused

by the slightest irritation to the nerves. People are called touchy and ill-tempered and various other things, and all the time, if the state of their nerves had been duly regarded by those among whom they live, the result might have been a most unbroken placidity. Come into my study, will you, a moment, and I will just tell you how I am situated."

Elizabeth's heart went a little quicker; he had begun to lean on her already, then; and when Mr. Beaufort placed a chair for her beside his writing-table, she felt herself mistress at the Rectory.

"Perhaps I ought to say that I believe I know how Nuna has behaved to Mr. Bright," she said, sympathizingly.

"To Will—what do you mean?" and the frown bent on her was so very decided that she told him her guess about Nuna's refusal. The Rector thought a few minutes.

"You may be mistaken: I am inclined to think you are. I do not think Nuna has had any talk of this kind lately with Will. Will Bright is exactly the man Nuna ought to marry—and I shall tell her so; he is very kind and excellent, but he is thoroughly practical and free from extravagant, high-flown notions—no romance about Will. No, I was not thinking about him; it is quite another person altogether—a stranger—an artist, who really has scarcely seen Nuna, and yet he has proposed for her. I told him I could not entertain his proposal for a moment, but he won't listen to me. I meant to take no notice to Nuna, but I feel sure he has written to her; that letter she got this morning was from him—I'm sure of it—and I must forbid the thing altogether."

Miss Matthews' light, colorless hair stood almost on end, and her eyes and her lips rose in simultaneous protest.

"An artist! But, dear Mr. Beaufort, how did Nuna make the acquaintance of such a person?"

"There's nothing remarkable in that,"—Miss Matthews' horrified tone annoyed him—"he is a gentleman, and a very remarkable person altogether, but still not suited to Nuna. I am not puzzled about him, he went back to London yesterday; it is Nuna who perplexes me: I don't know how to deal with her. My own idea is that these subjects are best left alone; opposition is sure to make girls contradictory and love-sick; and yet I must stop

this writing. I really don't know what to do," he said, plaintively; and then his vexation got vent at last. "Can't you suggest something? You ought to know how to deal with Nuna, Elizabeth," he said, irritably; "she was with you long enough."

Miss Matthews thought so too. She did not trouble herself about the fact that she never had been able to win her young cousin's confidence and affection; she was conscious that she had judged Nuna thoroughly, and that the girl's only safety lay in a prudent, well-considered marriage. It seemed, therefore, to her, that now the matter was put in her hands, Nuna's future must be safe.

"I think I should say as little as possible,"—she thought a while before she spoke,—"and then I should take an early opportunity of telling Nuna your wish that she should marry Mr. Bright. She is flighty, but I really think she is dutiful; and besides, if she has seen this gentleman so seldom, she can hardly care much for him, I think."

"Well, no—no, perhaps not." The Rector felt himself soothed, and yet, when he thought of Paul Whitmore, not at all satisfied; it was so very tiresome to be compelled to go through an explanation with Nuna.

Mr. Beaufort would have been less perplexed if he could have listed the roof from his daughter's bedroom that morning, but he would have been more angry. Nuna was kneeling beside her dressing-table; Paul's letter lay there, and she had kissed almost every word of it.

For every word was precious. Paul's love was no longer a doubtful imagination; he confessed it briefly and simply. He did not ask for hers in return, but he said he could not leave Ashton without explaining the full meaning of some words he had spoken at their last meeting. He told her he hoped to win her love, and to soften her father's opposition, and meantime he asked Nuna not to judge him too severely for anything she might hear alleged against him. "There is truth in that which will be told you," he wrote: "I only ask you to let me tell my own story, if you are willing to hear it, before you pronounce me quite undeserving of your love."

Nuna feasted on these words, read them over and over again, and then closed her

eyes, so as to enjoy the fresh delight when she opened them of seeing that it was not all a dream.

"He loves me!" she murmured softly, and the rich bloom of love rose on her cheek and ripened in her eyes; "he loves me!" and the tide of passion, all stronger from the repression she had maintained with such failing strength, throbbed in her pulses. There never can be any human sensation to equal this—a timid heart assured of the love it craves. Nuna stayed there, all unconscious of time or of present life.

A tap at the door startled her out of her dream of joy.

"May I come in?" in Elizabeth's voice, and Nuna congratulated herself that the door was fastened. She folded up her precious letter with reverent care and hid it away in her pocket—hid it with something else she carried there, a little pencil sketch of a head made on that first day after meeting Paul in Carving's Wood Lane.

"Mr. Beaufort wants you in the study, dear." Elizabeth spoke affectionately. She had tried to be kind to Nuna in this visit, but dislike to Miss Matthews was too strongly planted in the girl's nature to allow the trial fair play.

"She is only trying to make me civil, and then she will be as pragmatical as ever. I don't like her, and I can't be a hypocrite," Nuna thought.

Her lips quivered a moment at the message, and then she went down stairs.

"I suppose I must tell everything. Well, it will be a good thing over," she said to herself; "but I only hope papa won't make me angry."

Her father was bending over his desk; he did not raise his head as she came in.

"Sit down," he said, and then, after a little, "you had a letter this morning, Nuna?"

He waited, but Nuna did not answer. He longed to ask for the letter, and yet he could not make up his mind to do this.

"I believe I know the contents of your letter, and I am very sorry that it was written. I—I have sent for you now to tell you that you need not answer it."

Nuna had shrunk from the idea of writing to Paul, but contradiction rose in protest against her father's prohibition.

"And," Mr. Beaufort went on, for he scarcely expected she would speak, "in

the event of your receiving another letter of this kind—scarcely probable, perhaps, but still a thing which may happen—it will be better to give it to me unopened, and I will send it back to the writer."

He looked up at Nuna, and he was very much surprised indeed.

Fathers go on living with daughters, mothers sometimes do the same, thoroughly unconscious of the inner life, the real drama of existence which is being played out in the hearts of the seemingly gentle, unobservant creatures, and it often happens, where parents are devoid of keen insight, that this goes on to the end. In Nuna's case the sudden prohibition, like the touch of the angel's spear, brought passion into visible action, and the father shrank into himself with a feeling of helpless trouble at the girl's flashing eyes and panting, ardent words.

"No! I can't do that. I will not answer this letter, I am not sure he wishes it; but if he writes again I must read his letter. I will not do anything without your knowledge, father, but I cannot wrong him."

Mr. Beaufort passed his hand over his forehead—once, twice—and then shook his head feebly. He was utterly bewildered; he saw the fact that Nuna loved Mr. Whitmore, but he refused to accept it. Instead, his brain went off into a bewildering puzzle of how this had come to pass, and as to the causes which ought to have prevented it from happening.

"Him! he!" catching fretfully at the superficies of Nuna's indiscretion; "really, Nuna, you are talking in a most extraordinary way of a person who is almost a stranger. What can this Mr. Whitmore or his letter be to you? What ought they to be?"

"I don't know what they ought to be—" Here she stopped; she had been brave up to the point of confession, but the burning glow that seemed to scorch her eyes with its heat confused speech, and made it impossible; she stood mute, but her twining fingers and quivering face spoke eloquently.

A harder, firmer man would have been more cruel, would have forced her to speak out, but her father's fretfulness helped Nuna. He went on pettishly.

"Then am I to understand that you care about this person, or fancy you do, for you cannot really know what you think

about the matter? Oh Nuna, I'm ashamed of you. I can't tell you how I feel, that a daughter of mine should behave so like a silly schoolgirl, and about such a person too; oh dear, dear me!"

This last exclamation was caused by the fresh dilemma in which he found himself. He had not intended to say one word to Nuna about Paul's love for Patty, but then he had expected to find Nuna passive; there was such a thorough attitude of revolt about her, that however painful it might be to his sense of refinement, it was necessary at once to explain Mr. Whitmore's real character to her. In his heart the Rector believed that Paul's offer to make Patty his wife had been elicited by the girl's virtuous behavior, rather than from scruples on the part of the artist for a more unlawful course; the idea of Nuna's love for such a person became more and more repugnant.

"Father,"—Nuna spoke as she felt, in a highly wrought, intense way, which to her father was only confirmation of her unreal state,—"don't speak against Mr. Whitmore, please; I could not bear it, I know I could not. I have told you that I will not write or do anything against your wishes, but I cannot leave off loving him."

It had been very hard to say out in those naked words, with no one by to turn to for refuge, no one in whose bosom she could hide her eyes from the shame she felt. It was a wrenching of Nuna's whole nature to speak out her love openly, for one too who, as her heart whispered all the while, had not spoken out his love to her; who was, as her father said, a stranger so far as outward seeming counted.

Both Mr. Beaufort's hands fastened on the arms of his chair. Nuna had risen up and stood before him with all the strange wild beauty agitation creates in a face to which it is a new-comer, for till now Nuna's emotion had always been restrained in the presence of others. Her bosom heaved, her whole form seemed to dilate; the delicate expressive nostrils, those tell-tales of passion, quivered, and the large lustrous eyes swam with changeful feelings. She kept her slender fingers locked together as if they helped her to restrain her words.

"You do not know what you are talking about; you do not indeed, Nuna. You say I must not find fault with Mr. Whitmore; don't talk nonsense, child, I tell you I must."

The frankness of this last sentence was startling from Mr. Beaufort, but he was fairly off his balance, and all the niceties and small proprieties of life had kicked the beam along with him. "You fancy yourself in love with this person because you think him quite different to that which he really is; he's a wild, good-for-nothing fellow." He raised one hand at Nuna's indignant attempt to stop him. "Hush, Nuna, you must listen; if you had been reasonable and well-behaved, as I hoped you would be, you would have spared me and yourself too a great deal of annoyance. What can a girl like you know about a man's conduct? I desire you to stay and listen to this,"—Nuna was moving away,—"Mr. Whitmore paid far more court to Patty Westropp than he has paid to you when he was here in August."

"He is an artist, he admired her beauty; how could he help it?" The girl spoke proudly, but a spasm of jealousy tortured her.

"Nuna, I did not think you so vain, so self-willed; you will not let me spare you. Mr. Whitmore did much more than admire Patty, he loved her so madly—I quote his own words—that he asked her to be his wife."

All the glow faded out of her face, all the light left her eyes, yet she clung desperately to her faith in the man she loved, and strove to force her trembling lips into a smile of unbelief.

"Is that all you have to tell me?" Her voice had a defiant tone in it.

"All, Nuna?"—he spoke more earnestly—"surely I have said enough to show you, if you will only calm yourself, that this Mr. Whitmore is not really serious in seeking your affection. He is a man, Nuna, who loves, or fancies that he loves, every fresh face that falls in his way, and the wife of such a man must be miserable. This is a habit seldom cured by marriage. You do not love Mr. Whitmore, Nuna, you are in love with your own fancy, and a very short acquaintance would convince you of your mistake. You are convinced already—I hope so, at least."

Her face had drooped, but she raised it and looked fully at her father. "You are mistaken, father. I love Mr. Whitmore, and if I never see him again I shall never love any one else; there is no use in trying to prejudice me against him: I shall not change. May I go now?"

Mr. Beaufort saw that the very result he had foreseen and dreaded had come to pass: opposition to her wishes had driven Nuna into obstinacy. He was wise enough to see too that any further remonstrances would be useless.

"Yes, you can go, certainly: I think you must feel, Nuna, that you have grieved and disappointed me."

But Nuna scarcely heard him; she only wanted to be alone.

Alone, as she was before she got that summons to her father's study; ah, no, that brief hour of pure unalloyed trust and joy might well be precious now,—might well stand out white for ever in memory. She was alone again now, for what? Not to yield herself up to rosy dreams of Paul and his love, but to battle with a sombre torturing jealousy: it was so very hard to feel that she had given up all her heart, all her love, while he had only the dregs of his love to bestow on her. There was no use in struggling, no use in trying to cast out the demon of jealousy before it meant to go; she stood outwardly still, so pale and chill-looking that one might have thought her void of feeling, while within, the tender, loving soul was tossed on the waves of a fierce tempest. She had anchored herself, as she fondly thought, so surely—for Paul's truth, Paul's nobleness, had been to Nuna impregnable—and she had been cast adrift. But hope, that divine comforter, came at last to rescue her from drifting to despair.

"Is he to have loved no one but me, then? I have been no more than a hypocrite when I said I was not worthy of his love; if I had been true, I could not have been so vain as to hope to have it all from the beginning. Was he to keep his heart shut to all others till he met with such an insignificant creature as I am?" She hid her face in shame of her own vanity. Presently she lifted up her head; her forehead had cleared, and there was a sweet trustful look in her eyes.

"He is true! He may have loved that girl—I can't bear to think so; but I have no right to be angry. He loves me now, I am sure he loves me, and I will not believe he means to deceive me. Does he not ask me not to judge him? Why should I? Why should I wrong him and my own love for him by the smallest doubt? Oh, Paul," she broke down in sudden tears, "I shall never see you

again, perhaps, but I will always love you!"

CHAPTER XXXII.

MISS LATIMER.

It is August again, golden August, with its flaming sunshine and rich ripe full ears of corn, so full and heavy this year that they are longing for the sickle, longing to lie down and rest, instead of standing up like never-changed sentinels burning each day into a redder gold; while the sun, not content with his work on the corn itself, blazes yet more fiercely in the faces of the scarlet poppies and golden-bosomed marguerites below, till they send up glowing reflections on the fainting ears. And in Belgium the poor ears get rarely a green glimpse overhead; they see only an intense blue, with scarce a hair's-breadth of fleecy white to soften its hard uniform tint; the only trees are poplars—poplars, those emblems of self-righteousness which seem resolved to point heavenwards without holding out so much as one pendent bough to help their neighbors on the way thither.

It was a specially hot, dry autumn, and the rank and fashion of Brussels had taken themselves to Ostend and Blankenbourg to bathe.

Miss Latimer had lately arrived at Brussels; she had quitted Madame Minier's establishment some weeks ago, and had resolved on making a travelling tour with her companion before she settled herself down to study again.

"I'm not sure that I want any more teaching," she thought. "My French is as good as most people's. I can practise music, and unless people are first-rate, De Mirancourt says, no one plays in society now-a-days. I can pay artists to do that kind of thing when I give receptions. I believe, if I read and get myself well up in all that goes on, I am quite educated enough for any one. There's no use in asking Patience's opinion. She is so ignorant and so conceited of the little she knows."

Patty looked with a slight sneer at her companion. Patience had fallen asleep on the little red velvet sofa opposite to that on which Patty lay. The room was very still and quiet, overlooking the quaint courtyard of a small hotel in Brussels. Patience had begged hard to avoid the more frequented inns, quiet and mystery

being, according to Miss Coppock, the fit setting to enhance the effect of Patty's beauty.

She looked very beautiful just now. The large open sleeves of her muslin dress had fallen back, and showed the creamy white arm pillowing her head; one cheek rested on the rose-dimpled wrist, and the dull red velvet of the couch seemed to be there on purpose to throw all into higher relief. There was a striking, an almost awful contrast between the occupants of the two sofas. They might have served as models for joy and disappointment. Patty, with her softly rounded limbs reclined in graceful ease, her exquisite rose-tinted skin, her ripe and smiling scarlet lips and deep-colored soft eyes, her youth crowned by rich wavy luxuriant tresses, and Patience stretched out stiffly, the long bony feet showing below the flounce of her over-juvenile muslin dress; Patience with hollow cheeks and sunken eyes—eyes veiled now by dark brown lids; Patience with the thin lips of her firm mouth tightly compressed, and her sallow deeply-lined forehead bordered by thin scant hair, broadly streaked with gray. Can there ever have been beauty in this faded rigid face, beauty that a man has desired to call his own? and if beauty has been there, will Patty's face ever fade to this likeness when the glow and freshness of youth are gone? Time will show. A face is rarely a picture only to be injured and altered by outward influences or mischances. It is rather a sun-picture: the process is gradual instead of instantaneous, though the effect is the same; joy and sorrow, hope and fear, truth and falsehood, nobility and pettiness, earnestness and lukewarmness, self-denial and self-indulgence, print themselves at last legibly, ineffaceably marring or enhancing the flesh-and-blood beauty which is to them a mere canvas on which to exhibit themselves. And the skilled eye would now, in travelling from gray Patience to rosy Patty, have recognized a kindred expression, full-blown and yet hiding itself in the one, developing more boldly in the other—an expression of falsehood.

Patience was tired out. Miss Latimer had visited the Musée and some other picture-galleries; had also inspected St. Gudule, and had finally enjoyed herself to her heart's content in one of the best

jewellers' shops in the Rue Montagne de la Cour. Patty had not been extravagant—she was never lavish—but she had tried on about fifty bracelets, and had delighted in the effect produced on her lovely arms by their magnificence: finally she had contented herself with a set of coral ornaments.

Miss Patience entreated that she would buy something more showy, but Patty said it would be mere extravagance.

"I don't want anything to set me off in the way we live now, Patience. I can see no use in buying ornaments just to let them lie by and get old-fashioned. The first thing a man will do when he falls in love with me will be to smother me with presents. How can you know anything about such things? De Mirancourt told me everything. She had lovers of her own. *She* was beautiful when she was young."

Patty spoke contemptuously. Poor tired Patience had offended her. She had forgotten her submission for once, and given her opinion in a tone of equality at the jeweller's.

Miss Coppock's eyes flashed for a moment, and then her love of comfort prevailed; instead of answering, she lay down on the velvet sofa, and soon fell asleep.

But before she slept she had asked herself how it was that Patty held such sway over her; how it had happened that the plan for governing the heiress so carefully matured at Guildford had proved so utterly a failure in Paris.

"I am nothing better than a paid companion, except that I call her Patty when we are alone, and I am not sure that she likes that; at any rate at Guildford, if I was worried about money, I was free."

It was all very well to make this reflection and to fall asleep on it, but if Patience had been quite herself instead of being, as she was, irritated by the little flying darts which Patty used so skilfully, she would have known she was talking nonsense. Miss Coppock had begun her millinery business in debt, and debt had, according to its usual custom, thickened on her path, till her life had grown into one long series of prevarication and excuse. Patty's offer of taking her as companion had been accepted gladly, not only for the life of ease and luxury it promised, but for escape from the daily

harass and worry which were wearing her to a skeleton ; it is possible that but for all these years of debt Patience might have been better able to cope with her patroness, but the fiery independence which had once flamed in those dark sunken eyes had been quenched by the daily wearing pressure of owing money she could not pay.

"Poor creature, how tired she is!"
Patty was smiling most bewitchingly ; some pleasant thought was passing across her mind, though to do Patty justice she was rarely cross.

She liked to have her own way, and she usually got it ; it was impossible to refuse anything to her smiles, and it was nearly as impossible to resist the occasional plain speeches made by Miss Latimer to those on whom she considered smiles wasted.

"I wish she would wake," said Patty meditatively ; "it is very unhealthy to sleep so soundly in the middle of the day, and Patience does look so plain while she is asleep. Ugh!" The beauty shuddered and looked lovingly at the soft white flesh on which her cheek rested. "How dreadful it must be to have a skin of that color ; she's all skin and bone, poor creature ; her eyes are the only good point about her, and when she's asleep one don't see them : but then she hasn't got a hump, like De Mirancourt. What a shapeless heap of cunning wickedness that dear old French woman is ; she's all fun and sparkle. Never mind, she's done more for me than all the teaching and study in the world. She's taught me to value myself properly, and how to make other people do it too. If I hadn't known her and liked her, if I'd been such a goose as to take up the prejudices those silly English girls had against her, I should have known nothing of real life. I should have plodded on into a mere common place young lady ;" and then Patty closed her eyes, and a smile of intense enjoyment curved her full lips. The novelty had not quite worn off ; it was still delicious to realize that which she had been, and then to spring to the delightful certainty that no one, however prejudiced, could deny her right to be called a young lady.

"Just because she never went to Mass, as if it could matter : going to our Church may do some people good, but I can't believe any one was ever the better for all

that Romish rubbish. I rather respect De Mirancourt for being too strong-minded to give in to it. Patience ! oh, Patience, do wake up."

Miss Coppock started up at the sudden call, and Patty lay laughing ; her disordered hair and staring alarmed eyes gave Patience a very weird aspect.

"I hope I haven't disturbed you," said Patty, sweetly.

"I haven't been asleep, so there was nothing to disturb." Miss Coppock spoke with the determined certainty with which a person who has just been snoring the house down assures you he is, broad awake, and has heard every word you have been saying.

"Oh, I'm so glad ;" Patty smiled in such an exquisite way that Patience felt sure some more than usual service was about to be required of her. "I suppose you don't know, do you, where they keep the visitor's book ?"

"I can go and see," and Miss Coppock got up from the sofa.

"No,—Patty laughed still, but she spoke decidedly,—"not as you are, Patience, you would frighten the crows ; your hair, now I think of it, is just like a crow's nest. Suppose you ring the bell and tell the waiter to bring the book here."

To us who have not seen them together during all these months it seems surprising that the heiress had so easily learned to command her former mistress ; but Patty had one natural gift which does not always belong to cleverness ; she was not only quick in reading human nature, but she had that strange power, more subtle than mere tact, of adopting at once the means best adapted to subdue or fascinate it.

She had no depth of insight ; she could never have sounded Nuna Beaufort's heart, though she would easily have detected the sensitive, ill-assured nature that lay on its surface. Patty had not the gift of true sympathy, and sympathy alone can give thorough insight. She had no idea of the passion that lay hidden in Miss Coppock, though she comprehended perfectly the vanity and weakness which marred all that had once been true in the woman's nature, and this reading had taught her that the obsequious submission with which the milliner had treated her customers would be paid to herself if she took the lofty and commanding manner which some of those ladies had shown to Patience.

Even with De Mirancourt, who worshipped her for her beauty and her liberal gifts, Patty knew that she would never have held the same position if the wily Frenchwoman had ever suspected her origin. At Madame Mineur's she had represented herself as a young lady brought up in a lonely part of England, with few advantages of education; and the superficial polish she had gained from Miss Coppock's friend in London had enabled her to perform this character successfully, though her extreme beauty and charm did as much for her as anything else. It seemed to Patty that as she could not maintain this fiction literally with Miss Coppock, the next best thing was to act up to it; and from the day on which she left Madame Mineur's and took up her abode in the suite of rooms Patience had engaged for her, the ex-dressmaker had been aware that without a decided quarrel, which would possibly involve dismissal, there was no hope of changing the relations in which Patty's manner had placed them.

Miss Latimer's first act had been a prelude significative of the key-note she meant to strike.

She seated herself at once in the pretty little Parisian saloon, and took off her bonnet.

"Miss Coppock," she said, with a grave, sweet smile, "take my bonnet if you please; I will follow you to my room presently," and then Miss Latimer turned to the maid, who stood staring in open-mouthed admiration of her new mistress, and spoke to her in fluent French—French, which poor Patience in spite of her efforts, was as incapable of rivalling as she was blind to the grammatical blunders which the glibness of Patty's utterance disguised.

So that now this order to ring the bell sounded as a matter of course to Patience.

The waiter came, a bullet-headed, pink-cheeked Fleming, who took a great interest in these "dames voyageuses," as he called them.

"Ah," up went his shoulders and his hands, "it is a pity, but there is an English monsieur who has just demanded the book."

He looked at Patty, but she did not condescend to answer; De Mirancourt had told her nothing was so important as reserve and dignity with inferiors.

"Tell him to bring it as soon as he can, and come here, Patience;" then she whispered, "Will you find out if the gentleman who has just asked for the book is the new arrival this morning?"

Miss Latimer walked away to the window, and looked down into the court-yard while the conversation went on between the companion and the waiter.

"I believe I ought to have sent them on to the landing. Well, there's one comfort, when I'm really launched I shan't be likely to come to a quiet place like this inn, so if I do make mistakes here they are not likely to injure me afterwards."

The quaint court-yard, with its stone figures and jars filled with scarlet creeping blossoms, made a quiet scene of repose—of picturesque, richly colored still life; for the old walls around it were genial in their show of vines: purple and golden grapes hung in ripe luxuriance everywhere, and below, climbing up, as if to reach them were wreaths of flaming nasturtium flowers, with broad cool green leaves. But there was no leisure in the heiress's mind at present for the exquisite contrasts presented by gray stone and scarlet blossoms, or by tender green leaves and luxurious purple grapes; Patty's brain was filled with exquisite costumes, the best choice she could make among the lace she had that morning inspected, and also with surmises as to the position of the gentleman who had been so evidently struck by her beauty.

Going out early on their way to the Musée—it was so near that they had decided to walk, though Patty never walked if she could help it—they had met a gentleman coming into the hotel. He had just got out of a travelling carriage loaded with baggage; evidently he was a person of consideration.

He gave Patty a long look of admiration, a look which seemed to her involuntary; she thought he was too complete a gentleman to have stared in that way at a lady unless he had been bewildered by her beauty. She could not have told what he was like; she only felt sure he had fallen desperately in love with her. So little had she noticed him, that when they came back from their expedition, and she saw a well-dressed man with a fair beard watching her as she got out of her carriage, she would not have recognized or remarked him—for Patty was accustomed

to be stared at—but for the same intense gaze.

Then she saw that he was a moderately well-looking man, of middle height and age, with small light eyes, and a superfluity of fair hair and beard, a man among men rather like what a Pomeranian is among dogs—he looked silky and well cared for.

Miss Latimer had meant to question Patience about the new-comer; but Patience had been so tiresome as to fall asleep after her baffled attack on the subject of ornaments.

"Well," as soon as the waiter had closed the door, "what did the fellow say?"

"He says the gentleman who has got the book is a gentleman who arrived from Paris this morning. The man began to laugh when I asked. He said the gentleman saw us come in just now, and asked who we were."

"Asked who you were, did he? Dear me!" Patty smiled. "I hope the waiter will bring the book."

"I'm going to write to my father," she said after a pause. "When you go down to put the letter in the box, Patience, you can remind the man if he forgets."

Patience had gathered up the bonnets, parasols, &c., and was leaving the room with them, but she turned round as Patty spoke.

"I fancied your father had agreed to your change of name, and yet I noticed you directed his last letter Roger Westropp, Esq."

A slight flush rose on Patty's cheek, and the watchful eyes—eyes which were daily growing more eager for any the slightest clue to a permanent hold over the heiress—noted it in silence.

"No; my father has no wish to change his manner of life, or his name either; my whole life has changed, therefore it is far better to give the new life a new name."

Something unusual, artificial in the tone of voice, awakened Patience to suspicion.

"I can't fancy how you'll manage when you go back to England. Surely you won't live in that dirty house?"

Patty stood for a moment arguing with herself.

"If she stays with me, she must know," she said, "and I had better tell her than let her find it out." She paused a moment

longer. Should she dismiss Miss Coppock before she returned to London, find her some suitable situation, and cut the tie between them? Patience never knew how nearly that moment's hesitation had altered the future course of her life. "No," argued Patty, "I have made good my position with her; I have no need to be on my guard, as I must be with a stranger, lest some little mistake should undo all I have done for myself. Patience thinks me a wonder, and that doubles my power over her. She is too ignorant herself to know that I don't know how to do everything yet, as I will know before I have done." The soft sweet face looked almost stern in its determination. "Besides, Patience by herself, beyond my control, might chatter; nobody would believe her—perhaps, but I like to be quite safe." She went on aloud:

"I don't mean to live with my father when I go back to London; and as we are not to have the same name, although of course it will make no real difference between us, still I shan't call him father. We have nothing to hide or be ashamed of, you know we haven't;" she looked inflexibly into Miss Coppock's eyes, and they fell beneath hers. "I've changed my name, and paid for it, just because I wanted to avoid annoyance and extortion from people who knew me beforehand; but if I were to call him father, and yet have a different name, people would begin to suspect there was something to be found out. I am Miss Latimer, and Roger Westropp is my foster-father; for I suppose you know I contribute to his support. I don't know whether he receives it or lets it accumulate, but a certain income is settled on him for the rest of his life."

She spoke calmly and distinctly, and Patience looked aghast at this new proof of Patty's cleverness. For the moment the gravity of Miss Latimer's manner gave reality to her assertions, but not for long. Patience was too clever at subterfuge herself not to see the advantage that might accrue to her from the falsehood that Patty had chosen to act.

"And suppose any one finds out?" she said slyly.

Patty raised those deep blue eyes softly to her companion's face and gave her a long look.

"Do you know, Patience, you sometimes make me think you are afraid of

being found out yourself, the idea seems so uppermost in your head. Can't you see there's nothing to find out in my case? I've never done anything I'm ashamed of. I've been placed by circumstances in a different position to the one I was born in; I've worked hard enough, goodness knows, and I've fitted myself for my present advantages; it would be ungrateful and ridiculous to grovel back to my former state for ever. I'm not ashamed of it—dear me! no; but I've left it. I'm not Patty Westropp;" she gave a slight shiver at the name. "Other people—people with prejudices, you know—might be ashamed of it; why should I distress and annoy my friends by forcing my own past history on their notice! De Mirancourt told me once, and I agree with her, that there's nothing so vulgar as the way some people have of thrusting their family and their affairs on the notice of others." She changed her tone, and looked in a half-playful way at Patience. "I don't know what De Mirancourt would say though if she heard me holding forth in this way; she'd say it was vulgar to preach, I know. But, Patience, I should have thought you agreed with her in some things, you are so very close about your early life."

The sunken eyes fell again, and an angry flush spread over Miss Coppock's sullen face; but she was spared the pain of answering.

The waiter came in with a newspaper in his hand, which had come by the mid-day post, he said, and he had the visitors' book under his arm.

Patty seated herself, eager to examine this, and tossed the paper over to her friend.

"It seems about three months old," she said, carelessly.

Before she had found the place she wanted, Miss Coppock startled her.

"Here's news for you, Patty? What do you think has happened?"

For an instant Patty grew white. She did care for her father, far more than her manner to him would have vouchered for, and she thought some harm had happened to him.

"Isn't it father's writing outside?" she said.

"Oh yes, it's his writing, but it's nothing about Mr. Westropp; it's a marriage—your friend Mr. Whitmore. Here it is:

'At the Parish Church of Ashton, Paul Whitmore, Esq., to Nuna Cecil Beaumont.'

There was a little malice in the sparkle of Miss Coppock's eyes, but Patty gave no outward sign of mortification.

"Oh! they are married, are they?" she said; and her plump white finger went steadily down the list of names in the visitors' book.

"Maurice Downes, Esq.," she read, "'M. P., Hatchhurst Hall, Warwickshire, Bruce Castle in the Highlands, Park lane, London.' Ah, I thought he looked like a gentleman."

"Who?" Patty looked up quickly. Miss Coppock's voice sounded hoarse, as if she were ill; she looked ill enough certainly—ashy pale, and almost rigid. "Who?" she repeated.

"That gentleman we saw this morning—but what ever is the matter?"

CHAPTER XXXIII.

PATTY'S FRIGHT.

DAYS and weeks went on, and still Miss Latimer stayed in Brussels.

Mr. Downes stayed there too. He had managed to be one of the party when Patty went to Waterloo—she was too economical to take a carriage to herself—and during the journey he succeeded in pleasing Miss Latimer, and in rousing her out of her usual languid indifference towards fellow-travellers. Miss Coppock contributed to this result; she sat in a corner of the carriage with her veil down, and kept perfect silence.

"I can't think what possessed you, Patience! I declare if it hadn't been for Mr. Downes my tongue must have rusted before we got to the end of the journey."

Patty was looking at herself in the glass while she spoke, smiling in beautiful triumph at the remembrance of her fellow-traveller's irrepressible admiration. She took no heed of the despair in Miss Coppock's haggard face.

"I had a headache," Patience murmured. But Patty went on talking.

"I rather like him, do you know, though he is so English. Before we had been talking half an hour he gave me to understand he was rich, and that he had fine estates, and all that sort of thing. I don't believe travellers usually put more than one address in the book; some don't put any; it shows how purse-proud he is. I

believe men think far more of money than women do after all. He says he wonders how we can exist in these small, confined rooms, Patience ; so I asked him how he happened to be at such an insignificant place himself. You should have seen what a pufset he got in : he got quite red. He said he came here simply for quiet. He says at the great hotels the English of his class are marked men ; they can't get any privacy. Do you know, Patience, I feel sure and certain Mr. Downes's father was the first of his family ; at least De Mirancourt always said only mushrooms are full of their own importance. Never mind, he'll be the more easy to manage. If I find that he really is as rich as he makes out, I rather think I shall give him the opportunity he asks for."

"What's that?" In a sharp utterance, more like a cry than a question.

"Oh, Patience, how you startled me ; you've turned me pale with fright. Did you really think Mr. Downes had made me an offer at once? No, he knows better, he's a gentleman, though he is so fussy ; he only asked me to let him join us next time we went on an expedition."

"And what did you say?" Patience tried to speak quietly, but she could not hide the effort this cost her.

"Mercy me, *you* are fussy now ; I said of course I must consult my friend, and I wasn't sure if we should go on any more expeditions. Now you know why he was so extremely devoted in handing you from the carriage ; he sees how dependent I am on *you*." Patty threw herself into a chair and laughed heartily.

"I don't think you can allow him to go about with you. This party was exceptional ; it was made up too by the hotel-keeper to fill his carriage, not by you. I thought you said you meant to be so very select and particular, Patty?"

"Of course, so I am when there's a reason for it ; but just now I needn't be half as straitlaced as if I were living at home in Paris or London. If I'm to make acquaintance with Mr. Downes, I must see him sometimes—besides, of course, I've not decided ; I shall take a few days and think the matter over."

Patience made no answer and Patty went on.

"Mr. Downes seems a very suitable person—come now, Patience, you know he is in Parliament, and he does not belong

to titled people : if he did, he wouldn't think so much about mere money. I should like a title of course"—Patty put her head on one side and looked pensive, almost more lovely than when she smiled—"but then I want a husband who's rich enough of himself : I should only get hold of a poor spendthrift lord perhaps. Why," she said with a blush, "you ought to be content, Patience, I'm sure you've said enough to me about marrying a poor man." The blush changed into a frown ; she remembered that Paul Whitmore was Nuna's husband now.

"I advised you not to marry that young artist who had nothing to offer you but himself ; but indeed, Patty, you shouldn't do anything hasty, you might perhaps do much better than this Mr. Downes."

She turned away as she spoke ; something told her she would never influence Patty by contradiction.

Next morning at breakfast an exquisite bouquet came for Patty, and to Patience's surprise Miss Latimer insisted on taking a walk instead of a drive.

Days passed on, the ladies and Mr. Downes met frequently, and Miss Coppock's opposition grew. She did not mean Patty to marry just yet ; she was determined she should not marry Mr. Downes. She could maintain a dogged, sullen resistance to the acquaintance, but she had no power to cope openly with Patty ; she grew more and more silent and determined : if she could have managed it, she would have carried Miss Latimer away by force.

"We are to visit the old town to-day," said Patty, one morning. "Mr. Downes will meet us at the Grande Place. Now, Patience, do try and be a little more cheerful—I can't fancy what makes you so dull and quiet."

"I'm tired of Brussels." Patience spoke wearily, and Patty smiled.

"Ah, well, we shan't stay here much longer." "You old goose," she added to herself, "don't you suppose I know what's the matter with you, and don't you suppose he'll follow us wherever we go now?"

When they came home from visiting the old town, Miss Coppock felt strangely tired. She lay down on a sofa, and stayed there till Patty was obliged to rouse her.

"Come, you must rouse up," she said ; "I forgot to tell you Mr. Downes is coming to coffee this evening. Do you know he

has never seen me without my bonnet? and I promised he should come—why, Miss Coppock, Patience, what's the matter?"

At her first words Patience had sat up listening, but at the end she fell back heavily, white and faint.

Patty rang for the *femme de chambre*. Miss Latimer had never had an illness in her life, and she was incredulous about the sufferings of others; but when the good-natured Rosalie found she could not rouse Miss Coppock to consciousness, she ran away and fetched her mistress, and Augustine the cook; and when all their united efforts failed to restore the sick lady to her usual state, they went in a body to Miss Latimer. Patty had been pacing up and down the saloon, in much vexation and disturbance of mind, while the trio labored in Patience's bedroom, and she grew alarmed when she was told she had better send for a doctor.

The doctor came—an Englishman; he looked hard at Patty.

"I think I saw you in the old town this morning, madam."

"Yes, we were there." Patty spoke haughtily; she thought this man was neglecting his business.

"I had nearly warned you," the doctor said, gravely, "and then I thought a sudden panic might be as harmful to you as the actual risk you ran. The street you were in is full of small-pox cases, and I feel almost sure your friend has taken it."

Patty gave an exclamation of terror, but the doctor signed to her imperatively to control herself.

"I am not sure—I may not be quite sure for two days yet, perhaps longer, but the coincidence is remarkable with some symptoms I have witnessed. Keep yourself quiet," he said, severely. Patty was wringing her hands in a fresh access of despair. "Even if your friend has the disease, she may have it slightly, and you have been wise in sending for me at once."

"But I shall take it, I know I shall!" Patty almost shrieked; and she put her hands up to her lovely face as if to shield it from disfigurement.

The doctor's lip curled; he looked at Patty more attentively.

"You cannot stay here," he said. "If you like, I will take a lodgings and procure a *sœur* to nurse your friend; you will accompany her, I suppose?"

"Me! Oh no, I could not; I know nothing about nursing; I should only be in the way. I will pay you whatever you like for your care, if you will only take her away at once."

She put up both hands beseechingly.

"What a lovely creature!" the doctor said to himself; "it would be dreadful if such a face were spoiled; and yet—"

CHAPTER XXXIV.

MARRIED.

NUNA sat in the old studio expecting her husband. Her needlework had been thrown aside, and then a book which she had taken up by way of passing the time. The words grew to be mere arrangements of senseless letters. Her mind was so full of Paul that she could not take in any outside thought. One day before their marriage he had told her that he was sadly unpunctual, and she had laughed, and had answered she loved him all the better: punctual men were formal, like Will Bright. She thought of this at the end of her two hours' expectation.

"Ah! but then I had not realized how dreadful it is to be away from him; it seems as if the room grows darker when he leaves it. I wonder if the time is as long to him when we are apart."

She gave a slight sigh. There was sorrow on her face, but it had not been brought there only by Paul's absence. She had heard news since he went away—news which she expected, and yet which had troubled her. Her father's marriage with Elizabeth Matthews had taken place two days ago.

Miss Matthews had tried quietly, but steadily, to induce Nuna to listen to Will Bright; but Nuna had proved obstinate, and, to Elizabeth's surprise, Mr. Bright seemed cured of his passion. But if Mr. Beaufort and his daughter took a walk together Elizabeth found her own influence over the Rector weakened, and Miss Matthews' quiet, tortoise-like mind began to perceive that, if she meant to be mistress at the Rectory, she must call in some aid to get rid of Nuna.

She watched her more closely, and she felt sure that the girl was unhappy. Mr. Beaufort one day commented on his daughter's looks to his cousin.

"I believe she really does care about that good-for-nothing young artist," he said, gloomily.

Miss Matthews acted on this hint. If Nuna would not marry Will, she had better marry Mr. Whitmore. She approached the subject very carefully, but at last she asked Nuna why she had not answered Mr. Whitmore's letter.

"Because I said I would not ;" but the tone was sad, not angry, and Miss Matthews hoped on. It would have been against her principles to suggest directly a clandestine correspondence ; but her own feelings and wishes were waging war against her principles in a very dangerous manner.

By one of the strange accidents that so often happen in life, and which, if they were duly chronicled, would be far more marvellous than any creation of human fancy, Miss Matthews, coming home from an afternoon's shopping in Guildford, saw Mr. Whitmore on the platform of Ashton station ; and as she proceeded to the Rectory in a fly, she saw him walking along the road to the village.

Was he going to see Nuna ? At least she could make sure that Nuna should see him. It has been said that Miss Matthews was not naturally intriguing, neither was she quick-witted, so that the part she played this evening came to her piecemeal, instead of as the plan a bolder, shrewder woman would have had time to construct, as she drove homewards. She met Nuna at the garden gate, and the first step seemed to come of itself.

"Did you expect Mr. Whitmore, Nuna ? he came down by the same train that I did."

Nuna stood looking at her. Hope and fear grew too strong for the reserve she had maintained towards her cousin.

"If Mr. Whitmore calls here, do you know whether he is to be admitted, Elizabeth ? Am I to be allowed to see him ?" It was the first time she had owned, openly, that her cousin was deeper in Mr. Beaufort's confidence than she herself was, and she felt a rebellious bitterness to both her father and his adviser.

"No, I believe not ; he is not to see you any more ;" and then Miss Matthews stopped to consider how she could contrive that the lovers should meet. "If you go up the station road you might meet him." She might have spared this suggestion. Nuna had already turned to the gate ; if she hesitated now, she gave up her last hope of seeing Paul. Her

duty to her father was nothing to her love ; and she walked on fast to the turn in the road.

Elizabeth's dull brain cleared as she looked after her.

"Dear me, she is gone to meet him ;" and then a half-smile came on her pale lips at the probable result of the meeting. "I ought to tell Mr. Beaufort, at any rate ;" and she went to his study and told him.

Now, as Nuna sat waiting for her husband in the old quaint room in St. John Street, it seemed to her that one event had followed so fast on another since that meeting with Paul, that she was only waking up to reality ; that which had been happening had been a hurried dream —scarcely a happy one. Mingled with the intense joy of Paul's love came the remembrance of her father's anger when he met her and her lover, or rather when he and Will Bright had come upon them suddenly in Carving's Wood Lane.

Paul had persuaded her to go there with him so as to get out of the high road, and time had gone by till evening came, and still she had stood listening to him.

After that evening all had been storm and strife for a while.

Her father and Elizabeth had said she must marry Paul ; Mr. Bright was not the only person who had seen her with him in this strange clandestine manner. And so with little of previous courtship, with a haste which had a certain chill of foreboding in it, Nuna found herself standing beside Paul at the altar, saying the words that made her his for ever. Outwardly, Elizabeth had been kind : this had been easy when the Rector yielded so easily to her will, but still Nuna cherished anger against her cousin ; she had been too simple and too pre-occupied to suspect the motive that had made Elizabeth befriend Paul's love, and so urge on the marriage, but something told her that it was not any sincere desire for her happiness. She felt bitterly, too, that Miss Matthews had destroyed all confidence between herself and her father. And now only a fortnight ago Mr. Beaufort had written to her announcing his intended marriage with Miss Matthews, and had asked her to be present at it ; then Nuna's eyes had opened, and she had burst into a passion of indignant tears.

Paul tried to soothe her and to induce

her to go down to Ashton. He had promised to go out sketching for a day or two, so he could not accompany her. But Nuna would not go alone, and her husband let her decide for herself. He was too careless to trouble himself much about Mr. Beaufort's marriage ; he knew that her father had never been specially kind to Nuna, so perhaps it was not surprising that she should refuse to go ; and then he became absorbed in arranging his little excursion and thought no more about his wife's trouble.

Nuna was very angry still. It was an anger unlikely to die out soon, it had such a root of bitterness. If she had then gone down to that root, and tried to draw up some of its clinging fibres, or at least have washed them free of bitterness with penitent tears, it might have been well for her ; unowned, thrust out of sight, was the consciousness that if she had not neglected her father by her self-indulgent, dreamy ways, he would not have needed Elizabeth, and also that she had, by her own undutiful refusal to be present at his marriage, closed the door on her father's love.

"It is an insult to my own dear mother's memory," and Nuna hardened herself, as she thought virtuously, against any relenting.

It was a new sensation ; her conscience protested, but she would not listen ; and so she took the first step in that process which has done so much to mar domestic peace—she wilfully hardened her own heart.

Eight o'clock, and Paul had promised to return at five, and he had been gone three days. Oh, how could he manage to be happy away from her !

A clatter of wheels, then a ringing and a buzz of voices.

Nuna seemed to make one bound to the head of the staircase ; the lower rooms were tenanted by strangers, and she was timid about going down into the hall ; but in a minute Paul came rushing upstairs, his hair all ruffled over his eyes, but not enough to hide the gladness in them.

"My own pet !" and he nearly lifted Nuna off the ground.

Oh, it was worth all the long solitary time she had been enduring to feel that she had him once more all to herself, with no one to come between them—surely this was perfect happiness ! Even while

the thought lingered, she felt herself suddenly released, and Paul drew a step or two away.

"O Stephen, I forgot you, I declare. Nuna ! here's Stephen Pritchard, come home at last."

Nuna wished Mr. Pritchard had stayed in Italy, or anywhere away from St. John Street. How mistaken she had been, to fancy she liked this talking, self-asserting man, who positively contradicted Paul himself.

She felt cross with him and with herself for being affected by his presence. Paul looked at her ; he was struck by her unusual silence, and Mr. Pritchard saw the look, and smiled.

"The honeymoon is over," he said to himself ; "I expect Paul wishes he had not been in such a hurry."

"What made you so late ?" Nuna roused herself to speak.

"That's right, Mrs. Whitmore, call him to account."

Paul appeared to be very busy with his gaselier. "Am I late ?" he said.

Nuna felt in a moment that he was vexed.

If they had been alone, she would have put her arms round his neck and have kissed him, but she could not do this before Stephen ; she looked up quickly, there was a satirical smile on Mr. Pritchard's face.

"He will think Paul and I are not happy together," she thought, in a nervous, vexed way.

"No, indeed, I am not calling Paul to account, only I was afraid some accident had happened to the train."

"And suppose I hadn't come home at all ?" said Paul laughing.

Nuna laughed too, she had not the slightest fear that her husband was in earnest.

"Oh, I knew better than that, I knew you would keep your promise."

Paul turned round and looked at her ; something in his face troubled Nuna.

"Well," he said gravely, "it was a very near shave—if we had lost this train, we should have stayed all night."

"Then I should have sat up till you came in !"

Paul did not answer ; he thought Nuna silly to prolong this talk before Stephen Pritchard.

Nuna felt uncomfortable ; she got up and began to clear the table of her work

and books, to get out of the range of Mr. Pritchard's watchfulness.

Paul was a genius, but he could be silly sometimes. His artist friends had laughed at his anxiety to get home, and had said he was afraid of a lecture, and he had told himself that nothing he could do or say would ever seem wrong or vexatious to his sweet, loving wife. It was specially vexatious that she should have called him to account before such a watchful scoffer as Stephen Pritchard.

One of his abstracted fits mastered him, and but for Mr. Pritchard, the supper would have been very silent.

"I have heard from Ashton," said Nuna at last.

"From your father?"

"Oh no, only the announcement of the marriage in the paper."

"Well, it is a good thing over." Paul spoke carelessly; he was thinking of something else, and Nuna felt wounded.

It is very strange that men and women—at any rate till bitter experience has forced them to open their eyes—rarely use the sense of their own peculiarities of disposition in interpreting their neighbors. Some of us are ready enough to decide that because we should not act in such and such a manner, therefore our fellows are incorrect for so acting; but dreamy, unobservant people, like Nuna, are somewhat blind to outward characteristics, and are apt to rouse from their reveries into a timid, frightened belief that the gravity of their companion is caused by displeasure or indifference, instead of its being more frequently the result of a pre-occupation resembling their own.

Nuna tried to talk to Mr. Pritchard, but the fear of having displeased Paul weighed down her spirits.

Her husband noticed her silence. She was tired, he thought.

"Don't you sit up, Nuna," and he rose and lit her candle. "Stephen and I shall be late, I dare say."

There was no help for it; she had to say good night, without even a word alone to her husband.

"I shall not go to bed," she said decidedly, as soon as she had closed the double doors that shut off her room from the studio; "that hateful man can't stay here all night."

And at the same moment Pritchard was saying to Paul, "I say, old fellow, don't

let Mrs. Whitmore sit up; I'm not going to bed this hour or more: come across to my rooms, they are quite close, you know, we shall be snugger there."

Paul hesitated, but he was not going to be laughed at by Pritchard.

"I'll follow you in a minute," he said, and as soon as Mr. Pritchard had departed he went to find Nuna.

"I say, darling, go to bed, and go to sleep as fast as you can; I'm going to smoke a pipe with Stephen, and he may keep me talking."

When she saw her husband, Nuna had only thought of asking him not to be angry with her; this announcement, added to his frank, cheerful manner, changed her in an instant; the only excuse to be made for her is that she had been overwrought by the separation from Paul and sorrow at her father's marriage.

"O Paul," she said reproachfully, "going away again! and I have not had you a minute to myself."

She had thrown her arms around him while she spoke, but he drew back. Men like Paul are not to be scolded into tenderness. Nuna looked up, and saw the same expression that had troubled her on his first arrival.

"I thought you were different to other women, Nuna—nobler and free from pettiness—but you are all alike; you all make this mistake of supposing that men like to be managed. There, don't be silly." He leant down and kissed the face she had hidden in her hands. "I am only joking; there never was such a little darling, was there? Good night!" He took her into his arms and whispered tender, loving nonsense. "Get to sleep as fast as you can," he said, and he left the room.

CHAPTER XXXV. PATIENCE'S STORY.

"GONE away!" and then Patience Copock murmured to herself, "gone away without caring what became of me whether I lived or died."

"Yes, mademoiselle," was the calm answer; and Patience shrank from the quiet, observant eyes fixed on her altered face, and passed on up the stairs.

"Mademoiselle will find a letter from Madame on the table in the *salon*, and if she requires any attendance Mademoiselle will be kind enough to tell me now."

This being a discreet hint that Mademoiselle Louise intended to take the rest of the evening for her own amusement, Patience said sullenly she would have coffee and something to eat with it, and then she went into the *salon*.

Louise had opened the door for Miss Coppock to pass in. She stood on the landing with a marked expression of dislike on her placid face—placid all but the eyes, and these at times suggested that the placidity was a mask, and that Mademoiselle Louise had some qualities in common with a cat.

"It is inconceivable," she said to herself, "that a beautiful young lady like Madame should carry about with her anything so ugly—so unattractive—Miss Coppock is like a gray shadow. She was always ugly, but she is horrible with those holes in her face. Ah, Madame was in the right to depart before her arrival. *Ma foi*, I wish she had died, it is embarrassing to serve such a person. She is not much more than a servant, and yet it is necessary to serve her—*cela m'embête!*" Having softened her feelings by expressing them, Louise went to the kitchen to see after coffee.

Patience looked round the charming little room. Traces of Patty's presence lingered there still. A parasol lay on one of the couches, and exquisite flowers, faded now, had been placed in the different vases.

Patience had travelled a long way. She was sick for want of food, faint too from weariness, for, in her anxiety to rejoin Patty, she had undertaken the journey from Brussels to Paris before her strength was sufficiently restored; but before she thought of resting herself her eyes roamed hungrily about the room for Patty's letter. There were so many little tables, and these were so covered with the exquisite little treasures Patty had lately collected, that Miss Coppock did not at once see the letter. She found it at last under a china dog, and she snatched at it so eagerly that the dog fell and was broken to fragments.

But Patience took no heed of the dog. She tore open the scented envelope, heedless of the gold and silver crest it bore, and if she had heeded this it would not have prepared her for the news inside. Miss Coppock knew that Patty had talked of setting up a crest and a motto of her

own. Poor Patience! she had looked red enough on her arrival, with that redness which small-pox leaves as the brand of its recent presence; but as she stood beside the little table she grew almost purple while she read.

"DEAR MISS COPPOCK,—You will see by my leaving this letter for you that I have thought of you in your absence. By the time you get it, I hope you will be quite well again, and that you have escaped being marked or disfigured. I hope the doctor and the nurse did their duty by you; they ought to have, for I paid them well. I wonder what you will think of my news? Perhaps I ought to say I am sure you will be glad to learn that I am really settled for life. I married our friend Mr. Downes two hours ago at the Embassy. In fact, I write this while I am changing my dress, before we start on our marriage tour. No use in telling you where we are going—and besides, the route is not made out. Madame de Mirancourt says if I do not leave off writing there will not be time to put on my bonnet and mantle properly. It was very naughty of you to fall ill and miss my wedding—my dress is charming, white satin and point d'Aleçon—however, De Mirancourt has done her best to supply your place, poor old thing. She came to Brussels at once when I telegraphed for her. It was very awkward being left in that sudden way without a chaperon. I suppose you will remain in Paris until I write again? I shall probably require you to go on to London before we return. You will hear from me in a fortnight. Enclosed you will find a cheque for your expenses.

"I am, dear Miss Coppock,

"Your sincere friend,

"ELEANORA MARTHA DOWNES."

Have you sometimes watched fireworks till the grand *finale* comes, and then tried to see at one glance the vivid tongues of many-colored flames that dart skywards out of a glowing mass below? You cannot distinguish one from another; in the endeavor to see each distinctly, they become blended and confused. Anger, mortification, fear, sorrow, and worse feelings than those, lightened out successively on the dull, red face, till it grew hideous with the storm, yet the feelings were so blended that it was difficult to mark them all. Patience threw down the letter and trampled it into the velvet carpet; she clenched her poor worn hands in impotent fury, and then she looked fiercely round the room with those sunken eyes, from which all beauty of color and light had departed, as if she hoped to find some-

thing which might help her to revenge herself.

Miss Coppock felt that she had been treated with the most selfish unkindness ; but that was nothing compared to the baulking of her carefully laid plans, of her resolution that Patty should not marry till she had got firmer hold of her, and still more her fixed determination that, come what might, Patty should not marry Mr. Downes.

"I knew she was selfish, but then it seemed natural her head should turn a bit, but I didn't think she was sly—I couldn't have thought it of her. If it had been anything but small-pox ; I could think she made me ill on purpose to get me out of the way. Why is she to have everything and me nothing?"

She sank down in one of the luxurious chairs panting with exhaustion. Poor, worn creature ! contrasting her lot with Patty's, it seemed a hard one ; and yet at the outset Patience Coppock had started along the road of life with fairer prospects than any that seemed likely to open to Patty Westropp. Patience had been very handsome, though she had lacked the natural grace, the charm that doubled Patty's loveliness ; but Patience had not been born to hard work, she had been a farmer's daughter with servants of her own, a horse at her disposal, and bonnets and gowns at will. At seventeen these fair prospects had been overcast : her father sank all his savings in a mine on the estate of his landlord ; the mine went to ruin, proprietor and tenant along with it, and at seventeen Patience found herself alone in the world, without anything that she could call her own except her wearing apparel and a trifle of pocket-money. At this time of her life she was honest and independent, and she felt crushed with shame at learning the amount of her father's debts. His sudden death brought the knowledge without any warning.

"I will pay them off," the girl said to herself, with the daring hardihood of ignorance ; she had not yet learned how hard an oyster the world proves to the unknown and the friendless.

Her first experience was brief and bitter, and, like many another first experience, it dyed the years that followed with one inefaceable hue.

A rich lady in the neighborhood, the wife of the owner of a large estate called

Hatchhurst, wanted some one rather better than a nursemaid to teach her children to read ; they were babies still in the nursery. spite of her resolve to clear her father's name, the girl's pride rose : she would not accept the offered post unless she had a room allotted to herself ; she refused to associate with the nurses. The lady demurred, and finally yielded, in her heart thinking all the better of Miss Clayton for her request, a request which possibly produced the girl's ruin.

Patience went to Hatchhurst, and for a few weeks all went well with her ; her little charges were fairly tractable, and she did not see much of them ; their mother wished them to have some hours of play in the nursery.

"This will give you plenty of spare time, Miss Clayton," the condescending lady added ; "time which you may devote to your own improvement."

When Patience was alone again, she looked at her handsome face in the glass, and told herself she needed no improvement.

Her employers went away on a round of country visits ; they were to return in three weeks to meet the heir of the property, the eldest son by a former marriage ; he would be independent of his father when he came of age, his mother's large property coming direct to him.

He was just twenty, and was supposed to be spending the long vacation in Italy and Switzerland with a Cambridge tutor.

Two days after his parents had set out on there visiting tour he returned home alone. There were no old servants at Hatchurst. Its new mistress was an imperious dame, very jealous of anything that recalled her predecessor. Her first act had been the dismissal of the household, most of which had known the young squire as a child. He did not care for his little brothers ; he found no well-remembered face to welcome him, but he soon discovered that his step-mother had provided him with pleasant pastime in the nursery governess.

He met Patience in the garden at first by chance, then, after a day or so, by appointment. At home Patience had been allowed to associate freely with the young men who came to see her father. Her mother had died years ago. She had been unused to restraint, and when the young master of Hatchhurst asked permission to

came and hear her sing in her little schoolroom she admitted him gladly. Then came for Patience two short weeks of glowing happiness—happiness in which no dream of the future seemed too unreal, too bright, for fulfilment. She loved for the first time, and she was beloved. The love was not equal. Patience had a heart, and she loved with all the strength of womanhood. In return, she got that sort of boyish worship which goes by the name of calf-love, and which is as easily extinguished as any other newly-kindled fire. The young lovers were very happy and very innocent—neither of them looked forward—neither of them guessed that they were suspected and watched.

It had oozed out through Mrs. Robins, the abigail, before she went away with her mistress, that Miss Clayton had insisted on having a separate sitting-room and a separate table from the nurses. Thenceforth her doom was sealed; she was an upstart, sure to go wrong. Mrs. Caxton, the head nurse, and her two handmaids, only waited their mistress's return to report Miss Clayton's "disgraceful goings on with the young master."

One evening the lovers were seated as usual in the schoolroom, the young squire's arm was round Patience's slender waist, and she had hidden her blushing face on his shoulder while he repeated over and over again that, if she would only keep true to him, he would marry her as soon as he was of age.

"Only a year, my darling, no one can part us then; I—"

Patience never heard the end; the door was flung open, and she saw a confused crowd of angry and malicious faces.

She had an uncertain remembrance of being taken to her bedroom by Mrs. Caxton, and of seeing her clothes and possessions packed; but she did not completely recover her senses till she found herself driving leisurely along the road in the grand carriage which had just brought home the mistress of Hatchhurst. Then Miss Clayton realized that she had been turned out of the house in disgrace.

"I am lost, ruined! oh, what will become of me?" But as she drove on this panic of shame lessened; resentment came instead; she had been cruelly, unjustly treated.

"I have done nothing wrong, nothing to justify this; I gave my love in return

for his; there is no harm in that. Ah, I have only got to trust Maurice; he will take care of me."

But meantime she would not be carried away tamely, and she put her head out of the window and asked the coachman where he was taking her.

He named a town a few miles off, but he spoke so familiarly that Patience shrank back into the carriage in a fresh paroxysm of shame.

The coachman set her down at a quiet little inn; he went into the entrance-way with her and gave the landlady a note, and then he drove away.

"You'll have a letter to-morrow, Miss," he said, before he went.

The letter came; it was written as to a stranger. It commented severely on the deceitful and disgraceful conduct of Miss Clayton, who had, the writer said, utterly destroyed her own reputation; but it was added, that regard for a friendless orphan induced Mrs. Downes to try and save Miss Clayton from going further astray: enclosed was a note of introduction to a reformatory for young women in the town to which Patience had been taken; enclosed also was the amount due to her for salary.

Patience tore the letter into fragments. She waited on in hopes of seeing her lover, but time passed and no letter came.

She left the inn, and got herself a cheap lodging in another part of the town. A milliner's apprentice lodged in the same house, and through this girl Patience found employment. At the milliner's she worked at she heard her own story spoken of—she had taken the precaution to change her name—she heard, too, that her lover had gone abroad again. One day the mistress of Hatchhurst came to her employer's, and before Patience had time to escape she was seen and recognized.

The lady was too valuable a customer to offend, and Patience was again dismissed without a character.

She was discouraged, almost broken-hearted, but still faith in her lover's constancy and her own independence supported her.

She went to London, and after some struggles which brought her face to face with want, she again got employment at a milliner's.

"I have learned the trade," she said, "and it is more amusing than teaching;

and besides, one can get work without a character at this time of year."

But there were among Patience's fellow-workers girls who had lost their reputation in a less innocent way than she had, and she found herself led into society full of danger to a young, handsome girl.

One day she was summoned to attend one of the principals of the establishment in which she worked ; she was to carry a dress which had to be fitted.

Just before they reached the house a gentleman and lady on horseback passed : the lady was young and beautiful, and seemed to be listening attentively to the gentleman riding beside her. Patience looked at the speaker's face and recognized it at once. It was her lover ; and his eyes had never looked into hers as lovingly as they now strove to look into those of his companion.

The girl's spirit, chilled almost to death for an instant, rose to defend him. "He thinks I have forgotten him," she said, "and men must amuse themselves."

The couple dismounted at the doorsteps of the very mansion they were bound to, and as she and her employer waited while they passed in, Patience's heart winced at the tender care her lover showed towards his fair companion.

She was left in the hall while a servant ushered her employer upstairs and took the box she had carried.

It seemed to Patience that this was the crisis of all her long-cherished hopes ; if she missed this chance of a recognition, she and her lover might never meet again. She had written several letters to him at Hatchhurst, but she felt sure they had not reached his hands ; if she let him drift away from her into this great wilderness of London, she gave him up of her own free-will. She sat still, calm outwardly, but so inwardly agitated that her heart-beats almost choked her. Some one was coming down the great staircase into the inner hall in which she sat, but there were tall footmen close by ; she could not speak to Maurice before them, and a hot flush spread over her forehead ; she could not be seen by him, sitting there like a servant.

In a moment she had glided into the outer-hall, a carriage was waiting, and the house-door stood open ; she passed out.

When Patience found herself alone that night in her miserable little lodging, she

had that kind of tempest in her soul which seldom subsides without causing shipwreck in such a one as the poor vain milliner's girl.

She had had one moment of exquisite joy when she found herself in the street beside her lover, and then darkness had set in ; at first Maurice tried to avoid her, and when he could not do this, he told her he thought she was ill-judged in seeking to renew acquaintance with him. He spoke kindly and gently ; he told her he bitterly regretted his own folly, and also the hasty and unfeeling treatment she had experienced from Mrs. Downes. Patience listened first in stupefied surprise ; then in a sort of sullen despair ; then, when she thought he was leaving her, desperation forced her into one last effort to regain his love.

"O Maurice," she cried out passionately, "if you don't love me, I shall die ! Why did you make me love you ?"

Maurice grew white with vexation : Patience's words could almost have been heard on the opposite pavement, and he saw people coming towards them.

He pulled out a card-case and held out his card to her.

"If I can be of any assistance to you," he said in a hurried, vexed tone, "you can write to that address ; but I must refuse to see you again."

Patience found herself standing alone with the card in her hand.

"Here, young woman," said one of the tall footmen, from the top of the steps ; "your mistress is asking what's become of you."

"Write to him ! ask him for assistance !" The unhappy girl felt as if no depth of misery could wring such a meanness from her. All this went through her brain as she stood alone in her miserable little room.

In the midst of her frenzy of passion and despair, came a tap at the door. One of her companions had come to visit her ; she had brought tickets for the theatre. She was the worst among Patience's fellow-workers, and the girl had always refused to go about with her ; but to-night she welcomed any escape from herself. She went, and let her companion take her where she pleased.

Then came those months in Patience's life of which she had ever since been trying to hide the traces—a brief epoch of

MEANTIME life in the old studio at St. John Street was not gliding on as smoothly as life is always supposed to glide at the end of three-volume novels, when a loving hero and heroine are made one.

Doctors, and those who are freely admitted into domestic life, tell us that the first year of marriage is usually the most troubled. This may depend on the amount of intimacy which has previously existed between the newly-married pair, and also on the power possessed by the wife, not only of conforming herself to her husband's wishes, but of so projecting herself into his character, that she knows, as if by instinct, how best to please him.

In some women, love will do this; in others, where love is quieter, less intense, it may be the result of extreme unselfishness.

It was especially sad for such a nature as Nuna's that her marriage had been so hurried.

Paul was not a man to be read by ordinary rules; and, spite of her love, Nuna's timidity and want of observation came in the way of the thorough confidence which a less shrinking woman would have attained to.

When Paul went off into long hours of reverie, Nuna tried at first to rouse him, and then, getting short, indifferent answers, she grew to fancy she had vexed him. Sometimes she took courage and asked him what she had done, and then he answered playfully, and sunshine came again. With him, sitting near him, even through long hours of silence, she was happy, happy as a loving woman can be; but in his frequent absences she tormented herself. He went away to work, she knew that; but she was jealous of work, of anything that took him away.

Did Paul love her? Was she enough for his happiness?

"Ah, if I were, he would be content to stay at home with me instead of going off alone with that hateful Mr. Pritchard."

And at this time of his life, if Paul had been questioned, he would have said that it was only from habit that he spent so much time away from home—habit, and a certain undefined dread that haunts some men lest they should yield up liberty

sin and luxury. When this came to an end, she found herself placed in the business at Guildford as Miss Coppock, from London.

She had never been taught thrift, and the chequered life she had led since her father's death had not been likely to foster any regularity of mind or thought. And thus her life had grown into one continual stream of embarrassment and subterfuge, backed by the gloomy, haunting mists of the past. Patience felt no power now to live down evil repute. Her independence had left her when she yielded up her innocence. The aim of her life was to hide away that which she had been, and to keep up the fiction of her new name. When she thought of Maurice, it was with bitter anger; his desertion had thrown her into the frenzy which had led to her ruin. And yet, when at last she saw him again—her Maurice—changed into a calm, self-possessed man of middle age, Patience's heart grew strangely soft, and she felt as if she could lay down her life to serve him.

For, face to face with Maurice Downes, her shame seemed overwhelming; and by that extraordinary process of reasoning, or morbidity, which only exists in unselfish women, Patience shifted the blame of her fall wholly to herself. It seemed to her that her lover had not been as actually faithless as she had—he was still unmarried. He did not recognize her, but his presence crushed her with shame, and she longed to escape from the avenging memories it roused to torture her.

And now, in this letter of Patty's, had come the climax of her misery. The man she still loved, with a strong undying love, had joined his life to Patty's—to a girl who, as Patience knew too well, had no love for him; who merely looked on him as something annexed to herself, a something necessary to the part she meant to play in the world, but a something for which Mr. Downes, personally, was not more desirable than any other landholder of equal position.

The poor wretched sinner crouched lower and lower on the sofa, and again the heartbroken cry sounded—

"O God! is she to have everything—everything?"

of action. He might, at the expense of some trouble, have done this work, the copy of a picture Pritchard had brought from Italy, at home; it was by his wish that they lived at the studio in St. John Street. Mr. Beaufort had said that it would be better for Nuna to have a small house near at hand, and thus be altogether freed from studio life and society; but when Paul told Nuna this would involve separation except at meal-times, she was eager to live entirely in the quaint old house.

"I don't want a drawing-room or any conventional arrangement," she had said; "I only want to be always with you and to see you paint."

It was winter-time again. Nuna had stayed indoors all day shivering instead of bracing her nerves and her limbs by taking a walk. She was shy of going out alone. Paul often took her out "between the lights," but to-day, directly after dinner, he had disappeared, and had not said where he was going.

Nuna wrote occasionally to her father, but she never mentioned Elizabeth's name in her letters, so it was no wonder that Mr. Beaufort's answers grew short and cold, and only came at long intervals.

"If one could begin everything all over again," thought Nuna—"I wish I had not been cross and stiff about the marriage. Now I suppose Elizabeth will never forgive me, and I can't begin all at once to be different. With Paul too, if we had just one little quarrel—only one—and never any more after, it would be much better than all these private miseries of mine; we should get everything clear and straight for ever."

Doubtful, Nuna; if strife gets let into Eden, there is no saying that he will ever entirely quit it.

Paul came in presently. Coming in out of the brightly lit hall the room looked cheerless and darker than it really was.

"Sitting in darkness, eh?—and, darling, scarcely any fire—you careless monkey!"

Paul spoke good-humoredly, and returned her kisses as he spoke; but he felt that this was not quite the reception he ought to have had on a cold winter's night after a hard day's work. He made no complaint, but instead of petting Nuna as much as she expected him to pet her,

he stirred the fire vigorously, lit the gas, and then turned to go into his dressing-room to get his slippers.

But Nuna was awake now and thoroughly penitent.

"Oh, stay, please, don't go yourself, darling—oh, anybody but me would have got them ready."

But Paul put her back in her chair with a strong hand, and fetched the slippers himself.

When he came back Nuna was crying.

"Ah, Paul," she sobbed, "what a horrid, uncomfortable wife I am; how sorry you must be you ever married me!" And then she hid her face on his shoulder.

"I don't know that you ought to be blamed," said Paul. "You might have thought I should go out again to Pritchard's as usual, but I shan't be doing that for some time to come. In fact, I believe you'll have such a benefit of me, pet, that you'll wish Stephen back again—he's going to Spain."

Nuna threw her arms round her husband and kissed him till he was fairly startled at her vehemence.

"Oh, I am so glad," she murmured; "oh, so glad he's going."

"Poor Stephen! Why, Nuna, I'd no idea you were such a little hater."

"I shouldn't hate him if he were anybody else's friend;" she felt ashamed of her words.

"Then you only hate him because he loves me, eh, Nuna; is that it?"

"No, no; I am not so wicked. I suppose I can't bear you to love anybody but me."

Paul kept silence, he was thinking; but as Nuna nestled closer to him she felt his chest heave as if the thoughts were raising some amount of tumult.

"Turn your face to the fire," he said, presently.

"No, the light does not reach your eyes; kneel down, facing me—so;" he looked searchingly into her deep, loving eyes. "Do you know what I am looking for, darling?"

"No;" her voice trembled with a vague fear.

"I was looking to see if I could find any jealousy in your eyes, Nuna. I always say you are unlike other women; you have no petty, carping fancies; but you musn't let jealousy get into a corner

of that tender heart of yours, or you'll make us both miserable."

She took his hand between hers, kissed it, and then laid her face on it.

"But, Paul, can one be jealous without knowing it? If I were jealous in that way, you would not despise me for it, would you?"

"I don't know," Paul spoke gravely. "I have always shrunk from jealousy; my mother said no true woman could be jealous." Nuna shivered. "Come, little woman"—Paul smiled at her—"I want a song."

"Yes, in a minute, darling; only I must ask one more question." This was the talk she wanted, and she was hungry to go on with it; she could not bear to leave off, just when a few moments more would lay all her haunting ghosts.

"Not half a syllable;" he broke away from her and went up to the piano, which stood now opposite to the window, between the dressing-room door and that leading to the staircase. "I've been working-hard all day and I'm too tired to argue, I want nothing but rest. I've no doubt you'll sing me to sleep."

She went at once and sang him one song after another. She had a sweet, rich voice, and it had been carefully trained—trained to that exquisite simplicity which marks out the true musician from the pretender, if, indeed, simplicity is not always the badge of true merit.

While Nuna was singing the servant came in with a note.

Paul took it, but he did not open it; he was listening to Nuna. She was singing the same ballad which had so charmed

him the night he dined at the parsonage, the night which had revealed Nuna to him in a new character. Then there had been an intensity of feeling which had thrilled through him while he listened, but now it seemed to him there was a passionate significance in the mournful words as she breathed them.

"Come here, darling."

He took her in his arms and thanked her fondly for the pleasure she had given him. Nuna was too happy to speak, too happy for anything that might disturb this delight. She had Paul all to herself again, to worship and make an idol of to her heart's content.

It seemed to her as if the evening had flown when she found how late it was.

As soon as she left the room Paul sat down to write letters, and in clearing the table to make room for this he came upon the note he had thrown aside and forgotten.

He opened it, read it, and then flung it into the grate, after noting down the address.

It was merely a commission to paint a portrait, a lady's portrait, Mrs. Downes of Park Lane.

"Downes—never heard of her. There was a Lady Downes, I remember—never mind, she is some swell or other, no doubt."

He went on with his work; the only comment he made on the note was:

"I hope it is an old woman; they sit the best; the young ones haven't a notion of keeping still."

(To be continued.)

THE LILIES OF FASHION.

Browne, Junius Henri

Appletons' Journal of Literature, Science and Art (1869-1876); Jul 15, 1871; VI, 120; ProQuest

pg. 77

THE LILIES OF FASHION.

GOETHE told Eckermann that every witticism of his had cost him a purse of gold. Who can tell the price paid, by somebody else, for each appearance in public of a woman of fashion? She toils not, neither does she spin; yet Solomon, in all his glory, could never have begun to be arrayed like her. She is a work of the rarest ingenuity and the highest art. All kingdoms pay tribute to her: for her Flanders and India toil; France and Italy weave; England and Ireland spin; Brazilian bondmen work out their wretched lives. Manufactures, commerce, and finance, get half their impulse from her fastidious taste and insatiable need. She influences all markets, and is herself above quotation from the mysterious costliness of her making-up. Queen to the eye, she is the most subservient of subjects, and the most fawning of flatterers.

Time was when women dressed for men, whom it much concerns that the custom should be revived. It is the sterner sex, the tyrants of the race, whom the feminine mind desires to please; and yet so far has it strayed from Nature that it seeks, strangely enough, to ensnare the manly heart by exciting the envy of the womanly eye. All men, who are not monsters or mathematicians, receive some pleasure from the adornment of their sisters, sweethearts, and wives. But they have not the Milanese insight and the Mantuan instinct to distinguish in Florinda's toilet between the seeming and the actual. They do not know that her yellow lace, which in their innocence they believe sorely wants washing, is the genuine point de Venise, an heirloom, perhaps, of the Pisanis or Foscaris, originally bought with hundreds of golden ducats. When they see her neck encircled by flashing gems, they are unable to determine whether Brazil or Bourguignon has produced such brilliants. They have no means of judging between Genoa and Lyons velvets, between American and Antwerp silks, between Florentine mosaics and the basest imitations. Thus it happens that much of money's purchase is either unappreciated or altogether lost. Florinda wastes her father's substance in order to secure a husband, and only begets a rival's hate.

There is no limit in these days to the price of a woman's apparel, and each year the price increases. Dressed in the height of fashion, she may be any thing that attractive; but her costliness is something to be wondered at. London and Paris, Amsterdam and Brussels, Mechlin and Naples, Canton and Samarcand, she bears about her in the finest of their fabrics. Though a failure aesthetically, she is a financial triumph. She represents a money-value not to be despised; is a walking advertisement of her nearest relative's cash or credit. Albeit empty-headed and empty-hearted, she is redolent of dollars counted by the thousands. Between her French boots and her Paris hat, a snug independence has been swallowed up. Her Worth-made gown was not had for less than fifteen hundred dollars, and her camel's-hair shawl was declared cheap at three thousand. The price of her Alençon collar would support a common family for a season, and on her arms she wears what to many would be a competence. She is a breathing bank-account, a symbol of coupons cut off and cashed, an expression of large and regular dividends. She may not respond to the subtlest emotions; she may be so deaf when charity calls, that no moral aurist can cure her; but, as the sign of a certain number of dollars and cents, Fifth Avenue must respect her, and Broadway solicit her custom.

The difference between man's and woman's dress is remarkable. He has so little to choose from, and such slender resources of attire at best, that his greatest bravery of adornment is dull and monotonous. The veriest dandy of the Boulevards, Oxford Street, or Broadway, can spend but a small part of an ordinary income on the most ingenious tailor. If he wish to show his contempt for filthy lucre, he must be both fast and foolish; must have periodic headaches and remorse, to convince his companions that he has a soul above sordidness and sobriety. When he wearies of his club, his horses, his flirtations, and dissipations; when he finds every thing a "deuced bore," he searches for a new sensation in marriage, and finds it, not in the unwavering

love of a fresh heart, but in the astonishing length of his wife's perpetual bills. His desire to kill time is succeeded by his desire to kill milliners and mantua-makers; and he learns, to his troubled amazement, that not time but woman is money. He wedded that he might have something to live for, and he has it. He lives to furnish the means for his spouse's extravagance. He has improved his condition. He can no longer regard life as empty, for he is bored in a new way.

We all remember the words the Duke Aranza spoke to Julian: "She is best dressed who, in her husband's eyes, looks lovely—the fairest mirror that a virtuous wife can see her beauty in." That kind of talk sounds very well on the stage; but it won't do to carry into actual domestic life. The duke was not of this generation: in short, he was an old fogey, and, if the whole truth must be told, neither gallant nor gentlemanly. We have always supposed that, in the sixth act, Julian revenged herself, and, certainly, she was not without reason for revenge. Still, the duke's sentiment was a good one; and if all the wives of to-day would confine their passion for clothes to the limit of marital approval, they would look fully as well, and wedlock would move easier than now. If they would only forget their dear feminine friends who make critical calls in the name of affection, and who delay their departure that they may lose nothing of whatever is to be seen; if they would study fitness and simplicity instead of show and prodigality, they would be better wives and truer women. Apart from the reckless waste which the slavish following of fashion causes, it is a mental hurt and a spiritual mischief to surrender all the uses of life to thoughts and plans and purchases of clothes. The creature of mode and society may not believe it; but there are higher things in the world than the patterns of gowns or the fineness of lace.

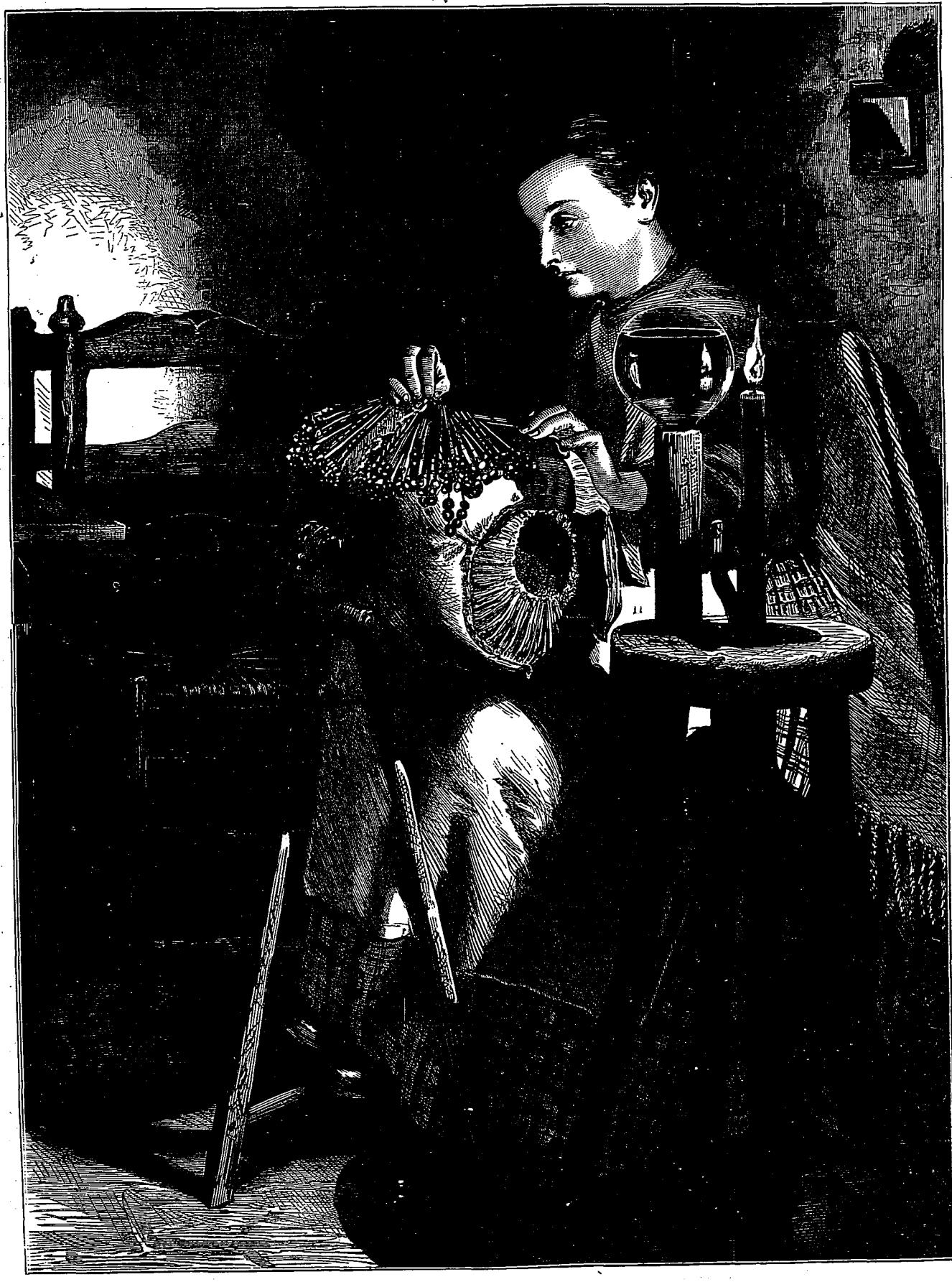
Grave questions of a social or a moral kind are bound up in the subject of over-dressing. Unimportant as the needless outlay of money seems, much goes with it that is of deeper import. That society cannot be good, nor that life wholesome, in which expenditure is always disproportioned to income, in which woman serves but as a form for the display of the latest styles. Let her go clad in choice and graceful raiment—it is well and becoming she should do so; but let her give to her mind and heart something of the same attention she bestows on her attire. Nature teaches us the value of externals by giving to the birds of gayest plumage the poorest song. And the best society holds that blind worship of the outward dwarfs the inner spirit of beauty.

Loveliness is not born of silks and laces, of fashions and ornaments; and they who value such have no voice in the judgments that are honored and influential. The curse of clothes, so far as women are concerned, is upon us in its might, and, until women learn to exorcise it by moderation, they should not complain of satire and sarcasm at their expense. Nature and reason are wiser than the milliner and mantua-maker; and even women who have no higher ambition than conquest, should remember that the miraculous preserver of Diane de Poictier's charms beyond her sixtieth year was only water nure as it fell from heaven.

JUNIUS HENRI BROWNE.

THE LACEMAKER AT WORK.

Every Saturday: A Journal of Choice Reading (1866-1874); Apr 8, 1871; 2, 67; ProQuest
pg. 325



THE PILLOW-LACE MAKER.

THE LACEMAKER AT WORK.

THE sight of hand-made lace is apt to excite the same sort of feelings in the minds of a reflective person as those which were expressed by Goldsmith when he wrote —

"Here the pale artist plies the sickly trade,
While there the courier glitters in brocade."

We cannot avoid a painful remembrance of the enormous diversity of condition that generally exists between the wearer and the

worker. The wearer of such delicate and expensive fabrics is generally endowed with a superfluity of this world's goods, while the worker is for the most part a poor toiling creature, whose constant and continuous labor barely yields a subsistence. Some day we shall, perhaps, learn how to correct the glaring inequalities of conditions now existing, meanwhile let us glance for a moment at the lace-manufacture. Until about three centuries ago lace was made by the needle on a piece of fine-woven material, the

threads of which were drawn aside to form holes or meshes, held in position by a few stitches. In 1861 Barbara Uttmann, of Annaberg, devised a method of twisting threads round pins so as to form a knotted or netted fabric; this was the real origin of pillow-lace, the making of which gradually extended to various European countries. The implements used by hand-lace makers are few in number, and inartificial in character. They consist of a pillow or cushion, a series of bobbins or small cylindrical pieces

of wood, round which the thread or silk employed is wound, and pins which are stuck into the cushion, and around which the threads are twisted. The pattern of the lace is determined by the disposition of the pins, and this is regulated by holes pierced in a piece of parchment which is laid upon the cushion. The process of lace-making is accomplished by the twisting together of the threads upon the bobbins, and their being woven among and around the pins. The finest pillow-lace is made on the

Continent. The names of Brussels, Mechlin, Valenciennes, and Alençon at once call to mind the chief seats of the manufacture. In France alone, before the outbreak of the war, more than 200,000 women were engaged in pillow-lace making, and their average earnings were about a penny an hour. A good deal of lace is also made in the Erzberg, a mountainous district of Saxony, bordering on Austria. These people form a sort of race apart, the men do the cooking and washing, and attend to the gardens, while the women and children make the lace. By working from morning till night, they can earn about sixpence a day; they live chiefly on potatoes and salt, but they are described as a cleanly, cheerful, and contented people. In England lace-makers abound chiefly in Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire, the part of Devonshire around Honiton, and near Coggeshall in Essex. A flourishing manufacture has also sprung up during the last forty years in Limerick. Concerning machine-made-lace we will not speak here. The quantity annually produced is prodigious, and the head-quarters of the trade still centre at Nottingham.

Some years ago an officer of Engineers at Munich contrived an ingenious plan for making lace without either human labor or machinery. Having made a paste of the plant on which a certain species of caterpillar is accustomed to feed, he spread it thinly over a stone of the required size. He then, with a camel's-hair pencil dipped in oil, drew the pattern which he wished left open. The stone was then fixed in a sloping position, and a number of caterpillars placed at the bottom. They ate and spun their way up to the top, carefully avoiding every place touched by the oil. The lace thus made is extremely light, a piece measuring 26½ inches by 17 inches, weighing only 1·51 grains.